

RLUK Research Libraries UK

Equality, diversity, and inclusion in the research library. An analysis of RLUK institutions' job descriptions

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Methodology.....	3
Job description analysis.....	3
Interviews.....	4
International landscape analysis.....	5
Limitations.....	5
EDI in job descriptions.....	5
Statements and values.....	5
EDI-focused roles.....	6
Role responsibilities and person specifications.....	7
Beyond job descriptions.....	8
EDI structures and the role of the library.....	8
Recruitment and retention practices.....	9
Looking at the broader landscape.....	10
Conclusion.....	13
References.....	14
Appendix.....	15

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INTRODUCTION

Research libraries across the world are striving to become more inclusive and diverse places where scholarship and learning can thrive. Over the past few years, efforts have focused not only on developing and presenting library collections in more engaging and inclusive ways, but also on creating a diverse workforce which can be representative of the multicultural communities that libraries serve today.

According to the Research Libraries UK (RLUK) strategy 2022-25 *The Library Transforming*, RLUK institutions 'are committed to creating and maintaining inclusive organisations, structures, and spaces which celebrate diversity, welcome difference, and embed positive change'. However, regarding the library workforce, previous research has shown that this is still overwhelmingly white (e.g. Schonfeld and Sweeney, 2017; Ishaq and Hussain, 2019) and many institutions are struggling to recruit and retain staff from a range of protected characteristics (e.g. Kung, Fraser, and Winn, 2020).

Thus, this piece of focused research aimed to investigate how issues around equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are represented in the job descriptions of RLUK member institutions as well as how libraries apply EDI values to their recruitment practices. It also looked at whether new roles, including leadership positions, are being created to drive EDI initiatives and contribute towards culture change within institutions. Finally, the representation of EDI initiatives and roles amongst RLUK members was placed within an international context through a comparison to initiatives being undertaken by US and Canadian research libraries. The goal was not to single out the practices of specific institutions but to identify current and emerging trends amongst the RLUK community compared to elsewhere.

METHODOLOGY

Job description analysis

For the purposes of this study, an analysis of 319 job descriptions submitted by RLUK members to the [Research Libraries Position Description Bank \(RL PD Bank\)](#) was conducted between July-August 2022. The Research Libraries Position Description Bank (RL PD Bank)- previously ARL (Association of Research Libraries) Position Description Bank- was launched in 2013 and is a collection of position descriptions (PDs) from major academic and research libraries in the US, Canada, and the UK. RLUK joined as a partner consortium in 2021.

The roles submitted by RLUK members come from across the different areas of the library. These include leadership and senior roles as well as middle management and junior positions. The below institutions (Table 1) have actively contributed to the RL PD Bank so far and, thus, their position descriptions constituted the main sample of this research.

Table 1. RLUK members with job descriptions in the RL PD Bank
King's College London
Queen Mary University of London
Queen's University Belfast
Royal Holloway, University of London
University of Birmingham
University of Leeds
The University of Manchester
University of Nottingham
University of Reading
University of Sussex

Regarding the approach employed for the analysis of the RLUK member position descriptions, the focus was both on direct and indirect references to EDI. Examples of direct references to EDI can be:

- Roles which include language directly linked to EDI (e.g. anti-racism; equality, diversity and inclusion; LGBTQ+; disabled/ disability; decolonisation) in their title, often indicating that they have been created as part of or to drive EDI initiatives.
- Relevant EDI language (e.g. anti-racism; equality, diversity and inclusion; LGBTQ+; disabled/ disability; decolonisation) in the main body of the job description either as part of a positive statement, the role duties and description, or a person specification.

Examples of indirect references to EDI can be:

- Language and expressions as part of the role title, description, duties, and person specification that does not directly refer to EDI but can be considered supportive of EDI. For instance, the statement 'to support a wide range of users and work with people from different professional backgrounds' can be considered supportive of EDI.

Interviews

The job descriptions research was complemented by semi-structured interviews with one or two representatives from six RLUK institutions which helped build a broader picture of the EDI initiatives that are being led by members, as well as how these relate to recruitment practices of which the design and development of roles and position descriptions is a part.

The participating institutions (Table 2), which gave their permission to be cited in this report, are:

Table 2. Interviews – Participating Institutions
King's College London
National Library of Scotland
University of Leeds
The University of Manchester
University of Nottingham
Royal Holloway, University of London

The questions directed to the interviewees aimed to facilitate conversation on the below issues:

- Institutional policies or strategies around EDI
- What or who drives change in the institution
- Roles that have been particularly created to drive EDI initiatives
- Representation of EDI issues in the RL PD Bank job descriptions, including direct and indirect references to EDI
- Recruitment practices and how they support EDI
- Collection and use of statistics in support of EDI
- Interest in the development of a programme for emerging leaders

Interviews were conducted virtually between July-August 2022 and each one lasted up to an hour. Discussion during the interviews helped to clarify some of the issues raised through the analysis of the job descriptions as well as provide background information about relevant institutional practices and initiatives. Collecting contextual information was particularly valuable as the job descriptions in the RL PD Bank did not always reflect the most current institutional practices around EDI and recruitment (e.g. older job descriptions in templates that are no longer used).

International landscape analysis

The results of the analysis from both the RL PD Bank job descriptions research and the interviews were placed within an international context. This was achieved through examining relevant job descriptions submitted by research libraries in the US and Canada to the RL PD Bank.

Given the large number of position descriptions in the database- 4900 in total from ARL, ASERL, CARL, and RLUK (as of 26th August 2022)- a more targeted approach through keyword searching was conducted to bring up any relevant roles. The aim was to look for relevant positions, especially leadership roles, that have been created by institutions in the US and Canada as well as gain an insight on how issues around EDI are represented within the body of the position descriptions (e.g. duties, person specification, positive statements).

The terms used to conduct the keyword searches were chosen based on the terminology used to refer to EDI issues and initiatives in the RLUK job descriptions in the RL PD Bank. However, these were also informed by the interview discussions and the type of terminology generally associated with EDI in the UK and beyond. A discussion of the results of this research looking at the practices of institutions in the US and Canada and how these relate to RLUK institutional practices as revealed through the job descriptions in the RL PD Bank and the additional interviews is presented later in this report.

Limitations

Before presenting the results showing aspects of the practices around EDI and recruitment of RLUK members, it should be noted that these may not necessarily be representative of the practices of all RLUK institutions as the analysis was based on the limited sample of RLUK job descriptions in the RL PD Bank submitted by 10 institutions. Moreover, as several of these job descriptions are older, they do not reflect the most up to date EDI practices within institutions, something that became apparent through the interviews. Finally, the targeted approach (keyword search) employed to explore the volume of job descriptions uploaded in the RL PD Bank by research libraries in the US and Canada enabled us to get an overview of some of the main practices around the representation of EDI issues in the position descriptions of these institutions. However, it did not allow for a detailed examination of related practices in ARL, ASERL, and CARL institutions and, thus, it may have not revealed all possible aspects of these practices.

EDI IN JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Statements and values

The majority of RLUK job descriptions submitted to the RL PD Bank include some type of EDI or positive statement. These are most often found at the bottom of the job description template and refer to the strategic plan and values of the library's home institution around EDI; the presentation of this information varies, and it can range from a few sentences to a table listing the values of the institution. Some of these statements referred to the fact that the university or college is an equal opportunities employer and others included information about the institution's participation in the [Athena Swan Charter](#) (for gender equality) initiative. As it became apparent through the interviews, the templates used by the RLUK research libraries are in most cases provided by the human resources department (HR) of their home university or college or followed relevant guidance.

However, the template is possible to be adapted depending on the role and the type of employee the library is looking for. For example, if the need to increase the diversity of the workforce has been identified by the library, then it is possible to include a positive statement encouraging candidates from a specific background (e.g. ethnic or cultural) or with another protected characteristic (e.g. disability, LGBTQIA) to apply. This also applied in the cases when employees with particular skillsets (e.g. specific technical expertise) were sought for the purposes of a role; if it was deemed that the candidate with the right skillset

could not be found within the existing library or higher education community, professionals from beyond these sectors were encouraged to apply. Approval is often required, though, by the home institution to make relevant changes to the template which can make the role more attractive and the library an appealing working place to potential employees. In some institutions, teams within the library, such as customer services or EDI-focused groups, played an active role in the decision-making process around the type of EDI information to include in a job description and how this should be presented.

Based on the job description analysis, RLUK members had, sometimes, relevant policies which implied that EDI is part of a library's goals, values, and working practices. These were mostly found within the body of the job description (e.g. responsibilities and person specification) rather than at the beginning or end of the template. The statements including the home institution's or library's ambitions, values, and work ethics were considered direct references to EDI as the language used could be directly associated with EDI. However, in some instances, there were statements which did not refer directly to EDI or include relevant language but could be considered supportive of EDI and revealed inclusive recruitment practices. These included: the lack of requirement for a criminal record check for some roles; the fact that the home institution, including the library, offered policies that were family friendly or supported flexible working; or the fact that anonymised shortlisting for a post was undertaken. Even though such statements may not be directly linked to EDI, they encourage a wider pool of candidates to apply for a position and, as a result, are more inclusive and can increase diversity.

Regarding the format of job description templates, it is worth noting that this varied widely not only across RLUK members but also within a particular institution. RLUK members can upload both older and recent job descriptions which means that the templates and the way information is presented can vary; this directly relates to the presence of EDI statements as it is less likely to encounter EDI references (especially direct) in older versions of templates. Research across the RLUK submissions to the RL PD Bank revealed only one template which seems to have been created to communicate very explicitly the commitment of the home institution to EDI. This included statements from a senior officer of the institution at the very top, followed by a description of the institutional strategy around EDI and information on the staff benefits. Then, the actual job description began with the library's EDI statement and, at the end of the document, there was more information about relevant institutional policies (e.g. flexible working) and useful information about EDI initiatives and statistics.

Through the interview discussions, it became apparent that many research libraries are undergoing a process of reviewing their practices around recruitment as well as the way information is presented in job descriptions, which includes the development of new versions of templates. This process is often led by a department in the home institution (e.g. HR or EDI office) or a team within the library (e.g. customer services) and can involve: relevant training around the language to use in a job description's template and the position to place EDI statements (increasingly at the top of the template); the places to advertise the position to reach candidates from diverse backgrounds; and training around inclusive recruitment, such as around interviewing, and retention practices. Thus, it is very likely that there will be a shift in the way information is presented in the job descriptions by RLUK members in the immediate future, including the ones which will be submitted to the RL PD Bank.

EDI-focused roles

The RL PD Bank analysis of the RLUK job descriptions showed that there are 7 roles with direct references to EDI (e.g. specific terminology) in the title of the job description, often an indication that the role has been created, primarily, to lead and support EDI initiatives. Regarding the terms or short phrases used in these roles, these were: 'disability', 'race', 'anti-racism', 'LGBTQ', and 'inclusive practice' (also see Table 4 later in this report). The positions varied in terms of their seniority; they ranged from relatively junior (e.g. at internship level) to managerial and leadership positions (1 leadership position). The duties associated with these roles included working with and supporting communities from specific ethnic backgrounds or with other protected characteristics, or aiming to make collections more inclusive through decolonisation.

However, there were some job descriptions amongst the ones submitted by the RLUK community which included terminology in their titles that did not directly refer to EDI, but could be considered supportive of EDI (e.g. 'access', 'participation'); the duties listed as part of these roles and the attributes sought in potential employees were often directly related to EDI, e.g. aiming to achieve equality of access, widen participation, or work with underrepresented communities, demonstrate commitment to equality and diversity.

The interviews with RLUK member representatives shed further light on the reasons for creating these roles, especially the ones directly associated with EDI initiatives, and the conditions within which these operate. As it was reported, staff in member institutions and their communities (e.g. students) increasingly call for more diversity in the institutional workforce as well as a culture of inclusivity to generate and govern relevant initiatives and practices. However, research libraries often find it difficult to justify the creation of roles, especially senior ones, that focus solely on EDI initiatives as the home institutions already have EDI offices or other teams and groups that oversee EDI initiatives across the institution. Based on the interview discussions, it is more likely that libraries are able to create more junior roles, often with a focus on collections or community support, rather than leadership roles, especially with a focus on the workforce.

Some of these EDI-focused roles are short-term internships or graduate traineeships and are targeted to the student community of the home institution; supporting the employability of students is part of the goals of Higher Education institutions and, thus, the creation of roles that support this goal is more easily justified and funded. Despite the limitations (e.g. short term roles), these types of roles which are targeted to new professionals can constitute great opportunities to increase the diversity of the workforce starting from the profession's 'pipeline', an issue that was highlighted during the interviews.

Yet, the importance of having leadership roles which can champion EDI and influence cultural change was also underlined by interviewees, as more junior roles (even with a focus on EDI) do not often have the power to drive cultural change. This, in turn, can have an emotional toll for those involved, especially for people with lived experiences or in the cases where EDI is the responsibility of one person and not a team. Finding ways to involve leadership while also allocating EDI responsibilities to a group of people (if not everyone) is considered a more effective and fair method of driving change and sharing responsibility around EDI. Institutions can sometimes be hesitant in creating leadership roles that will very explicitly and openly champion EDI initiatives due to various challenges and concerns (e.g. limited funding, fear of reputation damage); however, failing to actively pursue EDI can sometimes be regarded as failure of allyship by institutional communities.

Role responsibilities and person specifications

Even though there were few RLUK job descriptions with direct references to EDI in the title, the majority of RLUK members had submitted position descriptions that included direct or indirect references to EDI in the role responsibilities and person specification sections (beyond the home institution's or library's EDI statements). Yet, the frequency and consistency with which these references appeared across the job descriptions submitted by institutions as well as the presentation of the relevant information varied. In many cases, relevant duties and responsibilities were linked to the type of the role; for example, a collections-focused role could entail responsibilities around decolonisation or a role focusing on widening participation could have duties related to increasing access to collections or engaging with underrepresented communities. Understanding of the Equality Act (2010) was also frequently included as a responsibility for various roles.

Apart from EDI-related duties and responsibilities that could be considered role-specific, some institutions preferred to include more general EDI-related responsibilities across many (if not most) of the job descriptions they had submitted to the RL PD Bank. For example, these could relate to the responsibility of an employee in following and respecting institutional strategies and policies around EDI and in actively supporting and promoting inclusivity and diversity in professional practices and behaviours. Moreover, person specifications often included statements referring to a candidate's commitment to EDI as an

attractive quality. Regarding the presentation of this information, especially around the more general EDI duties and personal attributes, institutions employed different approaches; most listed these together with other duties or personal attributes in the relevant sections, while some included EDI duties as 'other' duties. In the case of one institution, the employed approach was to include 3 statements around EDI at the top, middle, and end of the key responsibilities section.

It was also very common to include some type of EDI duties in the portfolio of responsibilities of senior roles (such as Associate Director roles or other managerial positions with specific EDI duties). As it became evident through the interviews, it is often easier for research libraries to add relevant responsibilities when recruiting for an existing role (e.g. after it has been recently vacated), than create a new one, especially a leadership role, due to the administration and funding challenges associated with this. EDI responsibilities attached to more senior roles were often related to championing and promoting EDI across a range of initiatives as well as actively contributing to the diversity and wellbeing of the workforce. However, thinking about the pool of RLUK job descriptions as a whole, it was usual to encounter roles, such as senior roles or roles requiring specific expertise, which did not have any EDI duties under their responsibilities' portfolio despite expectations to the contrary. To some extent, this is because many of the job descriptions are older and, thus, the way they are written does not follow the most up to date recruitment practices and EDI policies.

Finally, information related to the qualification requirements included in the person specification section of the job descriptions reveal aspects of members institutions' recruitment practices and the extent to which EDI has been taken into consideration. The majority of RLUK roles submitted in the RL PD Bank do not list advanced degrees or degrees on specific disciplines or other qualifications as essential requirements for applying unless these qualifications are considered necessary for the role; in that way, people from various backgrounds can apply. Yet, some institutions have incorporated EDI better than others in this part of the position descriptions and there is space for improvement when thinking about what is considered an essential requirement for a role while, at the same time, aiming to increase the diversity of the workforce.

BEYOND JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Even though the analysis of the job descriptions provided a view of how RLUK members incorporate EDI elements in the job descriptions as well as the creation of any relevant roles to support EDI initiatives within the library, it was not always possible to gain detailed information about the most up to date EDI practices of libraries. However, the interviews with representatives of some member libraries enabled us to collect further information not only about the position descriptions in the RL PD Bank, but also about existing EDI structures within the home institutions and the libraries, any inclusive recruitment and retention practices, and any relevant metrics collected by institutions to support EDI.

EDI structures and the role of the library

Based on the interview data, RLUK member libraries often have internal policies or codes of ethics to guide professional practices and encourage inclusive behaviour, but they tend to align their general approach to EDI with the home institution's strategic goals and ambitions in the area. Although this may be a requirement in some cases, aligning the research library's approach to EDI with that of the university's or college's (when applicable) can have certain benefits. For example, it can be easier to argue for the importance of specific EDI initiatives or the need to create a role to support EDI, if these also contribute towards meeting the EDI goals of the home institution. Increasing awareness of the library's relevant initiatives and gaining recognition can also be easier to achieve through this approach. Other types of initiatives, such as relevant campaigns led by the library, can also contribute towards this goal, while also involving and uniting the library's community, something that may be more difficult to achieve through an EDI strategy or policy.

Generally speaking, senior officers within the home institution are responsible for the university's or college's EDI strategy or agenda which, in turn, influences the library's approach. Some universities or colleges have EDI offices, but it is more common to have EDI committees and groups where representatives from across the institution can participate, including the library. More specifically, the Library Director often participates in relevant discussions that take place within the university or college and advocate for the library and its role in making Higher Education institutions more diverse and inclusive places for work and learning. Other members of the library senior management team have frequently EDI responsibilities and act as EDI champions within the library and beyond.

Regarding the factors that drive this cultural change towards more inclusive practices and behaviours in research libraries and their home institutions (when applicable), these are both external and internal. Certain events, such as the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests, and societal change can trigger further EDI activity within Higher Education and cultural institutions, while pressure from their stakeholders and communities can also lead to urgent action. Moreover, funding bodies increasingly require institutions to provide evidence of inclusive practice, something that contributes towards culture change as well. However, as it became evident during the interviews, library grassroots groups and other internal committees where staff members from across the library can participate have the power to shape the library's approach to EDI, through developing and leading relevant initiatives and making recommendations for change. Engaging staff from across the library in EDI (senior and junior staff) and allocating relevant responsibilities to a group of people instead of having one person take on the responsibility of EDI seems to be a more effective way to drive change within an institution and it is the approach that many are currently employing.

Finally, the interviewees of this research reflected on the relevance and potential importance of a programme aiming to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to undertake leadership training and become prepared to secure more senior positions; the ultimate goal would be to increase diversity at leadership level. Although it was agreed that such a programme would be of interest, certain issues should be taken into account during its development in order for this to have a transformative effect. The key points for consideration, as raised by the interviewees, are: the programme should be open to library staff (ideally beyond RLUK) from different career levels who showcase leadership potential; the programme's content should be developed accordingly to be beneficial to people from different career levels and backgrounds; while aiming to increase diversity at leadership level, the 'pipeline' of the profession should not be neglected; groups who are underrepresented in the library and who may constitute the target audience of the programme should ideally be involved during its development (e.g. through providing feedback); any support for those participating (e.g. mentoring, sponsoring) should preferably continue beyond the end of the programme; ensuring that any existing work is not duplicated by, potentially, joining up with other groups working towards a similar goal.

Recruitment and retention practices

As it became evident through the interviews, RLUK member libraries are taking steps to make their recruitment and retention practices more inclusive. This begins by changing the approach through which job descriptions are developed. Previously, it was often the responsibility of one person (e.g. in a managerial position) to write a job description and prepare it for advertising; however, the process that institutions tend to employ currently involves gathering useful feedback on a job description from different staff members to ensure that the role description and person specification are as inclusive as possible. Regarding vacancy advertisements, libraries are also looking to list these in places beyond the institutional website to reach a more diverse audience or target potential candidates from a specific ethnic, cultural, or professional background.

Additionally, and as mentioned earlier, it is common for library staff involved in recruitment to undertake relevant training with regards to job description development as well as interviewing. Regarding interview panels, these aim to be gender-balanced and bring together a variety of views (e.g. professional services and academic) based on the type of the role for which recruitment is conducted. Also, job applications

tend to be anonymised to remove unconscious bias while, before an interview, the needs of potential candidates are increasingly taken into account; for example, some have started or consider sharing interview questions in advance in the cases where there is a specific disability (e.g. neurodivergence). During the interview, candidates are asked about their awareness of or involvement in EDI initiatives as well as their plans to contribute to the area depending on the seniority of the role for which they applied.

It is worth noting that the various grassroots groups and other EDI committees within the library play an important role in the area of workforce development and retention as through their feedback and recommendations they were found to shape relevant practices within the institution. Open days can also support inclusive recruitment and retention practices as candidates from diverse ethnic, cultural, and professional backgrounds are encouraged to attend to find out more about working in a research library. Apart from this, there are different projects that aim to understand the views and experiences of certain members of the library's workforce and broader community (e.g. students from a particular ethnic background) and gather relevant metrics with the aim of making the library a more inclusive and diverse place to work.

Thinking about statistics and metrics, some libraries launch their own surveys and assessments with the aim of gathering useful information that will inform their EDI practices and strategic direction, while others use data provided by the home institution or external organisations and initiatives (e.g. [Athena Swan Charter](#)). However, for some libraries, it has been challenging to gather data around the diversity of applicants or their workforce, especially when this is provided by the home institution; due to the sensitivity of the data, this type of information has never been shared previously and, thus, new practices need to be established to facilitate the gathering, sharing, and use of this information. According to the interviewees, more activity is planned in this area in the immediate future with the aim of supporting the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce.

LOOKING AT THE BROADER LANDSCAPE

An examination of the job descriptions submitted by research libraries in the US and Canada to the RL PD Bank revealed a variety of roles from all areas of the library and from different levels of seniority with direct references to EDI. As noted earlier, a targeted approach through keyword search was employed to navigate the large amount of job descriptions currently in the RL PD Bank. For this purpose, a selection of terms often used by RLUK members to refer to EDI or which are widely associated with EDI were used to bring up entries which include relevant elements.

Table 3 Number of entries including the listed terms anywhere in the job description per consortium

Keywords terms (anywhere in job description)	ARL entries (4,563 positions)	ASERL entries (964 positions)	CARL entries (367 positions)	RLUK entries (319 positions)
Equity and diversity and inclusion	780	115	89	0
Diversity and inclusion	1010	141	90	136
Diversity	1724	305	147	155
Inclusion	1156	220	97	146
Equity	957	135	139	0
Equality	93	6	2	165
Disability	993	182	42	11
LGBTQ	77	0	36	1
LGBTQIA	5	2	0	0
Racism	138	39	22	3
Race	774	182	2	5
Inclusivity	81	12	0	5
Inclusive	786	154	79	1

As shown in Table 3, as of 26th August 2022, there were 984 entries by ARL, ASERL, and CARL which had all three terms ‘equity’, ‘diversity’, and ‘inclusion’ anywhere in the job description. It is worth noting that no RLUK job description submitted so far to the RL PD Bank includes all these three terms. A keyword search with the terms ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ anywhere in the job description, brought up an even greater number of entries, including several RLUK entries.

Searches with single terms revealed that the word ‘diversity’ is the most popular and widely adopted by all consortia; thus, it is found in 2331 from the 4900 entries in the RL PD Bank (as of 26th August 2022) uploaded by ARL, ASERL, CARL, and RLUK. The terms ‘inclusion’, ‘equity’, ‘disability’, and ‘race’ also brought up a significant number of entries, especially by ARL institutions, which means that there are either roles with relevant duties and responsibilities or job descriptions which include other elements (e.g. statements) with these terms. Regarding the term ‘equity’, it became evident that it is a term which US and Canadian institutions prefer to use over the term ‘equality’ which is more widely used by RLUK member institutions.

Keywords terms (in title of job description)	ARL entries (4,563 positions)	ASERL entries (964 positions)	CARL entries (367 positions)	RLUK entries (319 positions)
Equity and diversity and inclusion	12	1	0	0
Diversity and inclusion	18	3	0	0
Diversity	33	3	0	0
Inclusion	21	4	0	0
Equity	15	2	0	0
Equality	0	0	0	0
Disability	1	0	0	0
LGBTQ	0	0	0	1
LGBTQIA	0	0	0	0
Racism	0	0	0	1
Race	0	0	0	4
Inclusivity	1	0	0	0
Inclusive	1	0	0	1

Table 4 Number of entries including the listed terms in the title of the job description per consortium

Table 4 presents the number of entries from each consortium with the listed terms in the title of the job description as of 26th August 2022. The results of the keyword searches showed that there are several position descriptions, especially by ARL institutions, which have direct references to EDI in their title. More specifically, there were 12 entries which included all three terms ‘equity’, ‘diversity’, and ‘inclusion’ in the title of the position description; the majority of these were senior roles, including at Director, Associate University Librarian, and Assistant Dean level. A search with the term ‘diversity’ confirmed the popularity of the term and showed that there are several roles which have this term in their title. A combination of the terms ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ was also found in the titles of some position descriptions, while searches with the single terms ‘inclusion’ and ‘equity’ brought up a good number of entries as well. Thinking about RLUK institutions, there were no job descriptions with any combination of the terms ‘equity’, ‘diversity’, and ‘inclusion’ in their title. According to the table, there were 7 position descriptions with direct references to EDI in their title submitted by RLUK members; the terms used in these entries are ‘LGBTQ’, ‘racism’, ‘race’, and ‘inclusive’. CARL had no entries with any of the listed terms in the titles of job descriptions.

Overall, this research showed that, even though RLUK members gradually incorporate EDI elements (directly or indirectly) in their job descriptions, there are not many roles focusing solely on EDI (based on the job descriptions in RL PD Bank). On the other hand, it seems that in the US, especially, there is an increasing number of positions being created to drive EDI and culture change more broadly within research libraries. At this point, it should be mentioned that, through examining a selection of the job descriptions that were brought up through the keyword searches, it became apparent that institutions, mainly, in the US prefer to use the abbreviation DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) compared to EDI (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion) which is used more often in the UK.

Regarding the more senior roles that have direct references to EDI in their title, it is worth noting that the majority (if not all) of the responsibilities contained in their portfolio focus on EDI-related initiatives and activities which are usually both service and people focused. Relevant duties involve participating in a variety of groups and committees and working with a range of stakeholders to promote EDI and advocate for the role of the library. Also, professionals in these roles are often responsible for changes in organisational culture and workforce development and retention. Looking at the required qualifications for many of these roles, it should be highlighted that candidates are usually required to have advanced degrees and extensive work experience, while specific certifications on EDI are a desired qualification in many roles.

Apart from the roles which have been created to have a strong focus on EDI, research libraries in the US and Canada include EDI (often called 'Diversity Statements') and other positive statements in the job descriptions included in RL PD Bank. Moreover, other direct and indirect references to EDI are incorporated in the list of responsibilities of the role as well as in the list of qualifications and other criteria that candidates will need to meet to apply. Thus, the approach employed by institutions in the US and Canada with regards to incorporating EDI elements into the position descriptions is not very different from what RLUK members are gradually doing.

However, as only a small number of job descriptions from the ARL, ASERL, and CARL entries were examined thoroughly due to the focused nature of this research, it was not possible to develop a detailed picture of the practices employed by all consortia. As RLUK institutions progress their plans around EDI and more libraries submit job descriptions in the RL PD Bank, it will be worth conducting further research on this topic. This can entail a more detailed landscape analysis through a combination of different methods, such as job description analysis with survey and/ or interviews with institutional representatives from the different consortia participating in the RL PD Bank.

CONCLUSION

This piece of focused research aimed to explore how RLUK institutions incorporate EDI in the job descriptions as well as how libraries apply EDI values to their recruitment practices. It also looked at whether new roles, including leadership positions, are being created to drive EDI initiatives and contribute towards culture change within institutions. These objectives were met through analysing the position descriptions submitted by RLUK libraries to the RL PD Bank and interviews with representatives of some member institutions. A brief landscape analysis with the purpose of conducting a comparison between the practices employed by RLUK members and those by US and Canadian research libraries also took place.

The results of this research showed that RLUK member institutions increasingly incorporate direct and indirect references to EDI into the job description templates through including EDI statements or relevant duties and responsibilities in the role description and person specification sections. Yet, compared to institutions in the US and Canada, there are fewer roles, especially senior roles, focusing exclusively on EDI. At the moment, current structures within home institutions and other challenges (e.g. lack of funding) prevent many RLUK libraries from creating more roles which focus solely on EDI. However, the approach employed currently by member libraries involves adding EDI responsibilities to existing roles (e.g. after they are vacated), especially senior ones, and launching initiatives and groups which aim to promote EDI and contribute towards an inclusive working environment which can attract employees from diverse backgrounds. As RLUK members progress their EDI plans and more institutions contribute to the RL PD Bank, it will be worth repeating the job description analysis and combining it with a thorough landscape investigation to capture progress and understand how circumstances and practices around EDI evolve in the UK and beyond.

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APPENDIX Representation of EDI issues in job descriptions: Summary of identified practices in RL PD Bank job descriptions by RLUK & ARL

RLUK (based on detailed research)	ARL (based on keyword-search)
Using EDI or positive statements referring to the strategic plan and values of the library's home institution. Often found at the bottom of the job description template. Presentation varies.	Using EDI or positive statements referring to the strategic plan and values of the library's home institution. The term DEI instead of EDI is frequently used by US institutions.
Adding positive statements to encourage candidates from a specific background (e.g. ethnic, cultural, professional) or with another protected characteristic (e.g. disability, LGBTQIA) to apply.	Adding positive statements to encourage candidates from underrepresented identities to apply.
Mention of policies which imply that EDI is part of a library's goals, values, and working practices. Mostly found within the body of the job description (e.g. responsibilities and person specification).	
Statements which include indirect references to EDI or can be considered supportive of EDI and reveal inclusive recruitment practices (e.g. referring to family friendly policies or flexible working, lack of a requirement for a criminal record check).	Statements which include indirect references to EDI or can be considered supportive of EDI (e.g. referring to family friendly policies or flexible working).
Developing new job description templates that clearly communicate commitment to EDI. Encountered less frequently in the RL PD Bank so far.	Job description templates with sections that include information around EDI and how the library or university support this as well as how the candidate can contribute.
Creating EDI-focused roles. These include direct references to EDI in their title and are often created to drive EDI initiatives. Positions vary in terms of their seniority. Encountered less frequently in the RL PD Bank so far.	<p>Creating EDI-focused roles. These include direct references to EDI in their title and are often created to drive EDI initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several senior roles were identified with responsibilities on EDI-related initiatives and activities that are often both service and people focused. Advanced degrees and extensive work experience is usually required.
Job descriptions which include indirect references to EDI in their title (e.g. access, participation) and include relevant responsibilities in the role specification.	Job descriptions which include indirect references to EDI in their title and include relevant responsibilities in the role specification.
<p>Job descriptions that include direct or indirect references to EDI in the role responsibilities and person specification sections (beyond the home institution's or library's EDI statements). Examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI-related duties and responsibilities that are role specific. • More general EDI-related responsibilities, e.g. responsibility of an employee in following and respecting institutional strategies and policies around EDI. • Statements referring to a candidate's commitment to EDI as an attractive quality. • EDI duties in the portfolio of responsibilities of senior roles. <p>The frequency and consistency with which these references appeared across the job descriptions vary.</p>	Job descriptions that include direct or indirect references to EDI in the role responsibilities and person specification sections.
Not listing advanced degrees or degrees on specific disciplines or other qualifications as essential requirements for applying unless these qualifications are considered necessary for the role.	Requiring an EDI qualification for several roles, especially senior, that have EDI responsibilities and duties.

Note: Please consult the report for more details on the analysis and limitations

