

**Geneva Public Library District**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**  
May 2023

At GPLD, we believe all people have inherent worth and dignity, and we view and welcome everyone—all patrons, all community members, all staff, and all volunteers—as belonging to our GPLD community. We therefore commit to and value diversity, equity, and inclusion in serving our patrons and community, and in our paid and volunteer workforce.

What we mean by Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

By **diversity** we mean differences of all sorts, both visible and invisible, including differences in backgrounds; life experiences; perspectives; beliefs; opinions; racial and ethnic identities; national origins; sexual and romantic orientations; gender identities; religious and spiritual beliefs; ages and generations; physical and cognitive abilities; socio-economic status; cultures; education levels; political affiliations; lifestyles; interests; ways of experiencing and interacting with the world; and ways of thinking and behaving.

To us, **equity** begins with recognizing some people face more barriers than others because of differences in physical, cognitive, and linguistic abilities, or because systemic and historical inequalities have denied them the benefit of resources enjoyed by some others. Equity means leveling the playing field by providing every person with what they need to access the field and to be able to play effectively once they are on the field. Equity means providing every person with what they themselves need to access and benefit from our public resources, services, and support.

**Inclusion** means taking action to seek out, invite, welcome, and involve everyone; leaving no person behind; and providing every individual with genuine opportunities to benefit from our services. Inclusion means everyone feels represented, accepted, valued, respected, safe, comfortable, important, seen, and supported. Inclusion means everyone has a seat at the table and feels as if they belong, has a voice, and has an opportunity to speak and be heard. Inclusion means creating environments in which each person feels they can be themselves, feels welcomed as themselves, is comfortable joining and collaborating with others, and feels unafraid to express thoughts, ideas, and opinions.

Our commitments

**We commit** to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of what we do, into all our functions and processes, and into how we handle every situation. For us, diversity, equity, and inclusion will not be “additional work,” but simply the way we do things. Each of us brings different experiences, privileges, and beliefs to GPLD, but **all of us commit** to leveraging our differences to provide the very best service to our patrons, to all members of our community, and to each other in our day-to-day work.

We know we are on a journey, one in which this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement is just one step. Therefore, **we commit** to continuous learning and process improvement, and to making changes and correcting course as needed. At every point in our journey, **we commit** to not only talking the talk but walking the walk. We **commit** to connecting our community to discover, inspire, and grow.