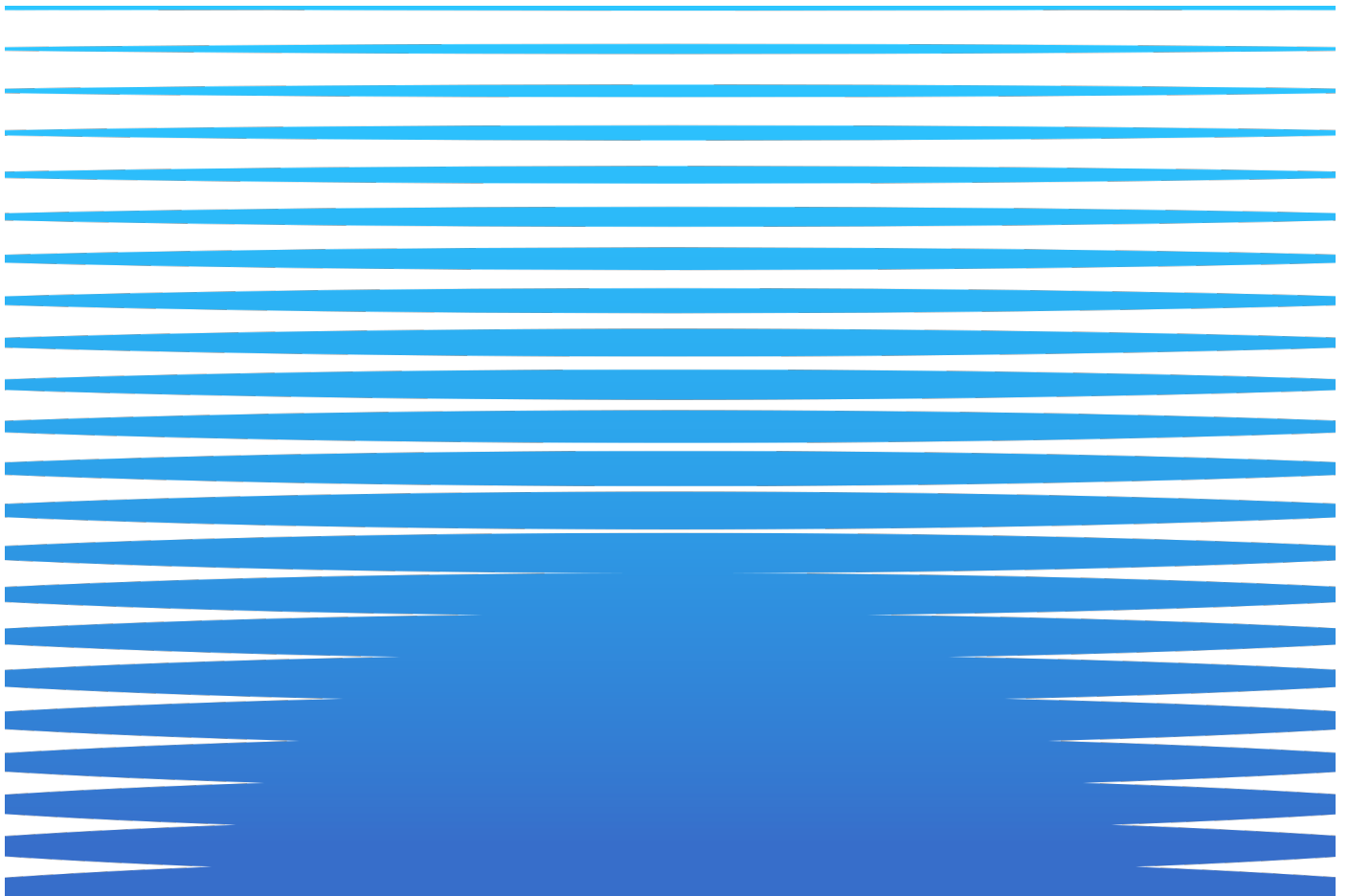


National Movements for Racial Justice and Academic Library Leadership

Results from the Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2020

Jennifer K. Frederick
Christine Wolff-Eisenberg





Ithaka S+R provides research and strategic guidance to help the academic and cultural communities serve the public good and navigate economic, demographic, and technological change. Ithaka S+R is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that works to advance and preserve knowledge and to improve teaching and learning through the use of digital technologies. Artstor, JSTOR, and Portico are also part of ITHAKA.

Copyright 2021 ITHAKA. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of the license, please see <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

ITHAKA is interested in disseminating this brief as widely as possible. Please contact us with any questions about using the report: research@ithaka.org.

We would like to thank the following sponsors for their support of this research:



SPRINGER NATURE
WILEY

Executive Summary

Academic librarians, like so many others in the higher education and library sectors, have discussed equity, diversity, and inclusion for many years. A number of prominent initiatives have worked to address these issues across the profession and within individual institutions. Yet, libraries have struggled to make progress on these stated values, especially in meeting their goals of employee diversification.

The organizing led by Black Lives Matter activists in 2020 following the murder of George Floyd sparked an increase in demands for racial justice across the higher education sector.¹ Many leaders called for an end to police violence and pledged to address their institutions' history of racism. Academic libraries in turn have grappled with renewed attention to increasing the diversity of their employees, addressing retention issues, and fostering equity and inclusion for both internal and external constituents. Some have also focused their efforts on library practices such as increasing the diversity of their collections.

To better understand the impact of these national events and long-standing challenges on academic libraries, we surveyed 638 library directors in fall 2020 to examine how perspectives and strategies relevant to issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism evolved over the last year.²

Key Findings

- **Library directors more highly value leadership capacities to foster equity, diversity, and inclusion than previously.** Respondents are three times more likely to consider this ability as one of the top three most important skills for directors to possess compared to 2019.
- **Library directors are less confident in their personnel strategies related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.** Fewer directors believe their libraries have well-developed strategies relative to 2019. Leaders at doctoral universities continue to believe their libraries have relatively more well-developed strategies.
- **Most library directors did not expect that employees of color would be disproportionately affected by cuts due to COVID-19. However, job types with relatively greater percentages of employees of color were more impacted by recent furloughs and role eliminations.** Black directors and those at doctoral universities and public institutions shared relatively greater concerns about the potential for this happening.
- **The majority of directors have not developed strategies to re-center their collections around authors of color and/or anti-racist content.** Likewise, most libraries have not developed criteria for evaluating and making decisions related to the diversity of their collections.

¹ See N'dea Yancey-Bragg, "George Floyd's Brutal Death Sparked a Racial Justice Reckoning. One Officer Involved Goes on Trial this Month. What You Should Know," *USA Today*, 4 March 2021, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/03/04/derek-chauvin-trial-george-floyd-death-how-watch-what-know/6889289002/>, for more information.

² A previous report from the same survey examined results related to strategy and budgeting in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Jennifer K. Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Results from the Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2020," Ithaka S+R, 9 December 2020, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.314507>.

Introduction

Academic libraries have grappled with how to make progress on their stated values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, in particular the racial-ethnic diversity of employees, for some time. In response, library leaders and external organizations have developed numerous programs over the years to make their organizations, and the field broadly, more equitable, diverse, and inclusive. The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) recently published an overview of such programs that appear to hold promise, for example staff and leadership trainings provided by the Racial Equity Institute and DeEtta Jones & Associates.³ For several decades, the American Library Association (ALA) has hosted the Spectrum Scholarship Program to provide financial support to students of color in the library field.⁴ Individual libraries have also implemented temporary diversity fellowships, typically two to three- year programs aimed at helping librarians of color gain experience in the field, such as those supported by the ACRL Diversity Alliance.⁵

Despite such efforts, little progress has been made in diversifying the field. As demonstrated by the ALA Diversity Counts study as well as the work of our colleagues at Ithaka S+R, academic libraries remain overwhelmingly white.⁶⁷ As Chris Bourg has explored, in 2013, librarians were almost 30 percentage points more white than the population of the United States as a whole.⁸ If diversity efforts continue to lag, this gap will continue to grow. In recent years, April Hathcock has published several critiques of the library field's diversity initiatives, detailing the extent to which recruitment criteria are embedded with whiteness and how retention issues affect employees of color in particular.⁹

While these issues are not new to the library field, nor the broader higher education sector, they have received renewed visibility and concern over the last year. Following the killing of George Floyd and increased media attention as a result of grassroots organizing through the Black Lives Matter movement, many higher education leaders issued statements calling for police reform and promising to address historical racism at their institutions. And, at the same time, higher education institutions navigated the unprecedented set of strategic, financial, and operational challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

³ Kiyomi Deards and Mark A. Puente, "Improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Libraries: Programs and Methodologies to Consider," *Research Library Issues* (301), 2020, <https://doi.org/10.29242/rli.301>.

⁴ For more information, see <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/spectrum>.

⁵ For more information, see <http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/diversityalliance>.

⁶ "Diversity Counts," ALA, 2007, <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/divcounts>.

⁷ Roger C. Schonfeld and Liam Sweeney, "Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity: Members of the Association of Research Libraries: Employee Demographics and Director Perspectives," Ithaka S+R, August 30, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.304524>.

⁸ Chris Bourg, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Librarianship," *Feral Librarian*, March 3, 2014, <https://chrisbourg.wordpress.com/2014/03/03/the-unbearable-whiteness-of-librarianship/>.

⁹ April Hathcock, "White Librarianship in Blackface: Diversity Initiatives in LIS," *In the Library With The Lead Pipe*, October 7, 2015, <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2015/lis-diversity/>; April Hathcock, "Why Don't You Want to Keep Us?," *At the Intersection*, January 18, 2019, <https://aprilhathcock.wordpress.com/2019/01/18/why-dont-you-want-to-keep-us/>.

This series of events coupled with broader long-standing issues prompted us to field a special edition of the Ithaka S+R US Library Survey outside our traditional triennial cycle in an effort to provide an opportunity for library directors to speak collectively on the impact of national movements for racial justice and COVID-19 on their organizations. In the following report, we explore issues of equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism, highlighting both where directors perceive progress and where they recognize major challenges remain.

On a positive note, we see evidence that as movements for racial justice have recently gained traction on a national level, academic library leaders have affirmed their desire to make equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism improvements within their organizations and parent institutions. Yet most still lack confidence in the degree to which their personnel and collections strategies support these objectives, and many have not yet recognized how recent budgetary cuts have likely disproportionately affected employees of color in particular.

Given the current financial constraints and uncertainty caused by downturns in enrollment, as well as long-standing and even more recent state defunding of higher education, the work to advance social and justice imperatives is bound to be made all the more difficult. In such an environment, it will be challenging for higher education leaders to make the case for any work that is not deemed essential, and yet it is clear that there is so much more that can be done to evaluate and improve outcomes, processes, and policies.

The data provided in this report help shed light—for higher education leaders, employees, advocates, and funders—on the progress that has been made and the many challenges that still lie ahead. By recording the collective challenges library leaders across the country are facing, we hope that libraries will be better positioned—collectively and individually—to develop and enact strategies to address these important issues.

Methodology

We emailed 1,473 library deans and directors at four-year colleges and universities across the United States to invite them to participate in our survey in September 2020, and received completed responses from 638 for an overall response rate of 43 percent. Of these, 83 percent self-identified as white and 64 percent as women. As in previous survey cycles, response rates differed by Carnegie Classification with 35 percent responding from baccalaureate colleges, 42 percent participating from master's institutions, and 53 percent from doctoral universities. Previous cycles of the survey, as well as advisor and tester input, led to the creation of the 2020 questionnaire with a particular thematic focus on the impacts of COVID-19 and movements for racial justice.

Consistent with previous survey cycles in this series, this study provides insights into the strategies, priorities, and perspectives of academic library leaders. As library deans and directors play an important role in shaping the future of academic libraries, we are able to use these surveys to examine the high-level issues of budgeting, staffing, and collections at college and university libraries.

Many of the questions included in this report include the terms equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism. In the survey, we did not define these terms as our survey testers, who were part of our survey population, were able to define them relatively easily. As such, we did not provide more expansive definitions in the survey.

The data gathered were analyzed using a variety of techniques including frequencies and other descriptive analyses, independent samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA with Tukey's HSD tests, and chi-square analyses. Results of these analyses are reported throughout this report if they are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. We have also noted the frequencies of responses over time, paying particular attention to large differences. See Appendix A for more details on methodology and Appendix B for a detailed breakdown of respondent demographics.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank our Library Survey 2020 advisory board for their input at key stages in this project, especially for their help in establishing the questionnaire. Our advisory board includes:

- K. Matthew Dames, University Librarian, Boston University
- Trevor A. Dawes, Vice Provost for Libraries and Museums and May Morris University Librarian, University of Delaware
- Amy Kautzman, Dean and Director, University Library, Sacramento State University
- Jonathan Miller, Director of Libraries, Williams College
- Kellie O'Rourke, Head of Library Sales, Americas, Cambridge University Press
- Sarah Pickle, Assistant Dean for Planning and Operations, The Claremont Colleges Libraries
- Deborah Prosser, Director of Olin Library, Rollins College
- Rachel Rubin, Associate University Librarian for Research and Learning, University of Pittsburgh
- Denise Stephens, Vice Provost and University Librarian, Washington University in St. Louis

We are also grateful to our colleagues who contributed to this project in a variety of ways, including Kimberly Lutz, Roger Schonfeld, Makala Skinner, and Danielle Cooper. In particular, this work would not be possible without the significant contributions of our colleague Nicole Betancourt who administered the survey.

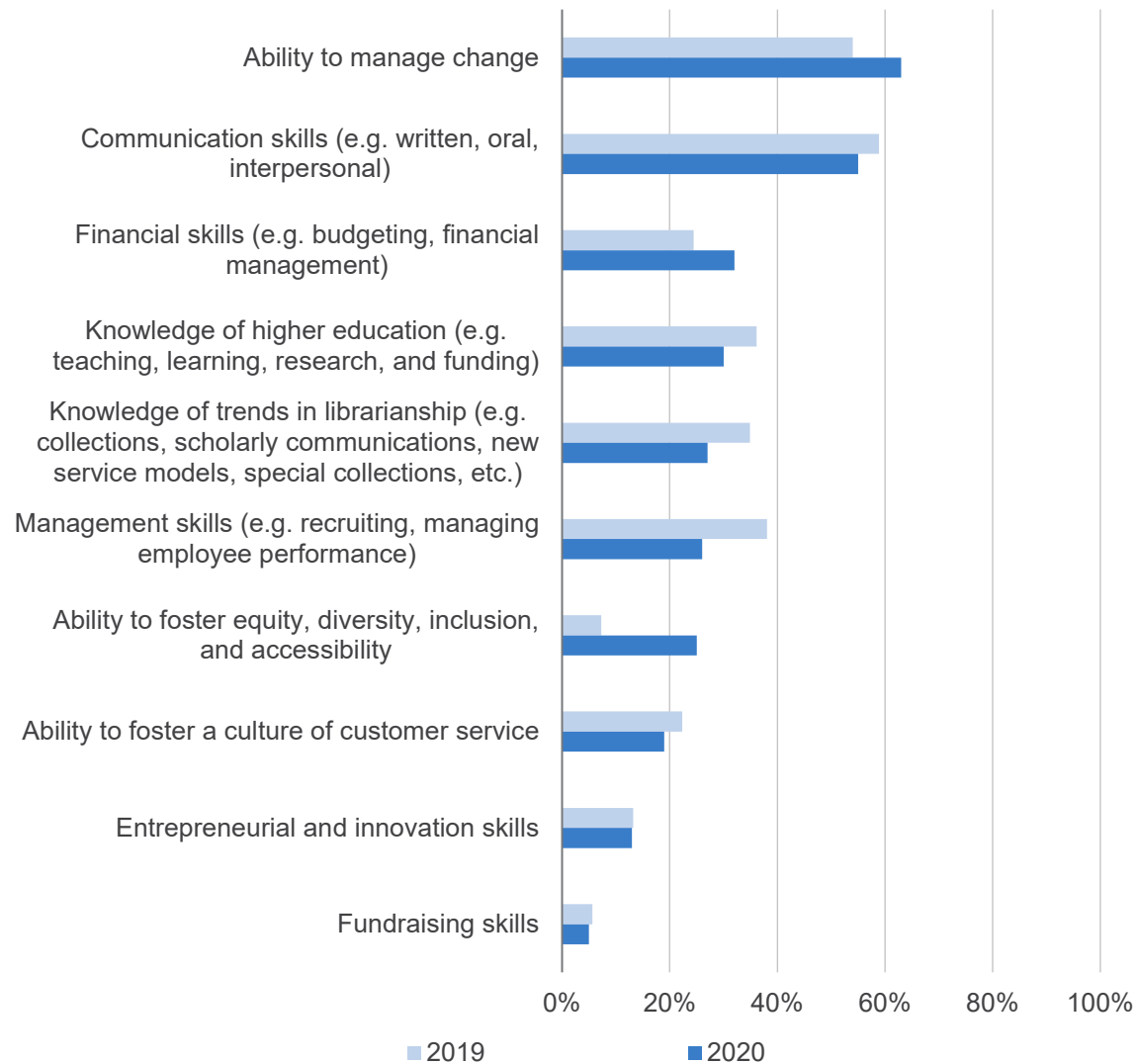
Leadership

One of the most important factors for making gains in equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism, within and beyond academic libraries, is the clear commitment of leadership toward specific objectives. In the Library Survey 2020, we explored how the strategies and priorities of library leaders have shifted as a result of increased pressure to improve outcomes for constituents and employees of color. In this section, we examine the skills library leaders consider to be valuable for their roles—including the ability to foster equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility—and situate our findings in previous work.

When we asked academic library directors which areas of knowledge, skill, ability, and competency were the three most valuable, the proportion who selected the ability to foster equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility increased dramatically between the 2019 and 2020 surveys. In 2019, seven percent of library directors considered fostering equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility as a top skill, while in 2020, this percentage increased more than three times, to 25 percent. While other skill areas also increased in importance—in particular, skills relating to finances and managing change, perhaps most directly in response to the impact of the pandemic—the biggest increase was in fact for skills related to leading with a focus on equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. See Figure 1. It is important to note, however, that although this skill increased the most in importance, it was still chosen by a smaller proportion of library directors than six other skills, making it the fourth-least chosen skill in our set.

Figure 1. Which of the following knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies are currently most valuable for you in your position? Please select up to three items or leave the question blank if none of these items apply.

Percentage of respondents that selected each item, by survey cycle.



The proportion of library directors who selected the ability to foster equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility differed notably by subgroup. At doctoral universities, 31 percent of library directors chose this skill as one of the top three, compared to 22 percent at master’s institutions and 21 percent at baccalaureate colleges. Similarly, those at public institutions chose the skill at a greater rate with 31 percent deeming it highly important, compared to 20 percent of those at private institutions. Further, while there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion of directors who selected this skill by race-ethnicity, a greater share of women (28 percent) chose it compared to men (19 percent).

There are perhaps two possible explanations for the newfound appreciation for these skills. Library leaders may feel that they were able to employ existing skills in a new way, or perhaps they recognize a gap in their existing abilities. The latter explanation may be bolstered by an analysis of dozens of academic library strategic plans that we published in May of last year, several months prior to fielding the Library Survey 2020.¹⁰ In analyzing these plans, we found that while most mentioned equity, diversity, inclusion, and/or accessibility broadly (e.g. affirming diversifying the library as a goal of the library), indicating at least some level of commitment to these issues, few offered concrete goals and plans for advancing relevant objectives. Given that library directors appear interested in achieving greater equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, as demonstrated by its inclusion in strategic plans, there may be a gap between this goal and the strategies needed to obtain it.

These findings also beg the question of whether qualifications for library director roles will evolve in response to what may be a recognized gap in existing capacities. An exploratory analysis conducted by Ithaka S+R with a sample of 33 library director job descriptions posted in the nine months before and after the murder of George Floyd and subsequent calls across higher education for addressing racism, there appears to be no change in the share of postings that mention relevant skills in this area.¹¹ Both in late 2019 through mid-2020 and in mid-2020 through early 2021, roughly half of the job descriptions analyzed invoke any terms related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. And, there were no library director job descriptions in our sample from either time period that mentioned the importance of a commitment to anti-racism. Thus, national movements for racial justice and subsequent commitments from higher education do not appear to have yet impacted the way that library director roles are envisioned.

Strategy

Improving equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism does not just require strong leadership, as described in the previous section, but a set of strategies, implementation of those strategies, and mechanisms for measuring change and maintaining accountability. In the Library Survey 2020, we included a set of questions on the confidence of leaders in their library's and their institution's equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism strategies for personnel and for their library's collections.

Personnel

Overall, library directors displayed somewhat greater confidence in strategies related to anti-racism than those on a broader set of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility imperatives.¹² Specifically, a slightly greater share of library directors agreed that their library and their institution have well-developed anti-racist strategies for recruiting and/or retaining employees

¹⁰ Jennifer K. Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "Measuring What Matters: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Academic Library Strategic Plans," Ithaka S+R, May 26, 2020, <https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/measuring-what-matters/>.

¹¹ An equivalent analysis has not yet been conducted for library employee roles, though this would shed light on how library directors are updating the skills within their own organizations.

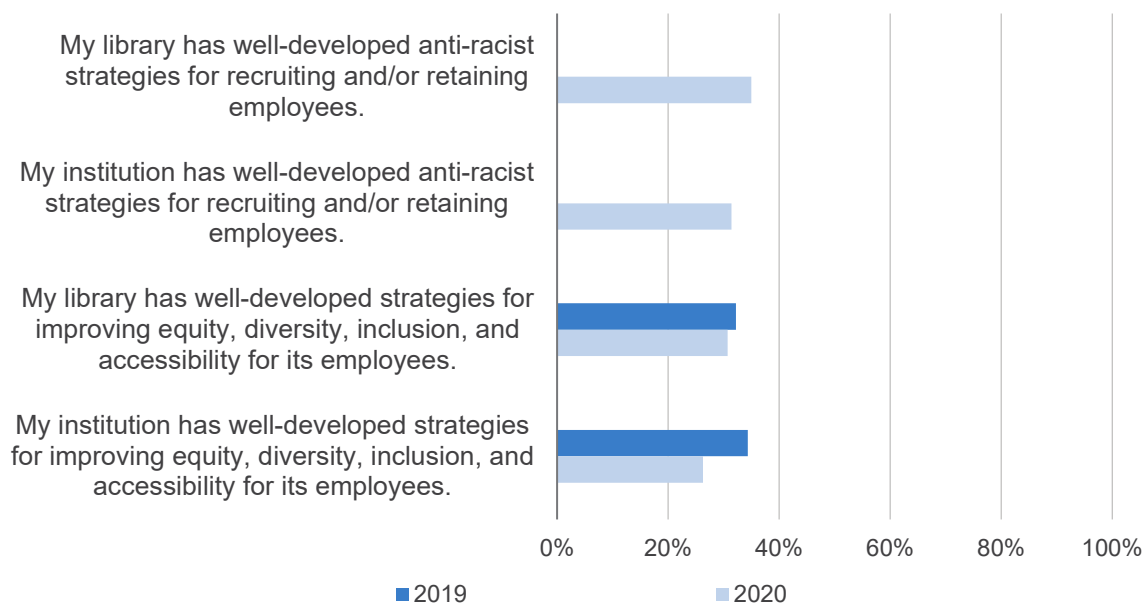
¹² See Appendix C for the full set of questions.

compared to more general strategies to improve equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility for employees at both the library and the institutional level. Within the library, 35 percent of library directors strongly agree that they have well-developed anti-racist strategies for recruitment and retention compared to 31 percent who believe their library has well-developed equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies for employees. Similarly, 31 percent and 26 percent respectively believe that their institution has well-developed anti-racist strategies and equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies. See Figure 2.

The directionality of these pairs of findings—that is, that there was greater confidence in strategies for recruitment and retention related to anti-racism than on equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility—is perhaps surprising given how often equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility tend to show up in key library documentation, namely job descriptions and strategic plans, and how infrequently anti-racism is invoked. It is possible that respondents viewed the items related to anti-racism as pertaining to legal compliance and anti-discrimination, whereas the other statements and associated strategies are broader and go beyond these legal requirements. Additional research on how these terms are—and perhaps should be—used and operationalized would be merited.¹³

¹³ While analysis has been conducted on institution-wide anti-racism statements from 2020 which were typically issued by college and university presidents (e.g. Kurubel Belay, “What Has Higher Education Promised on Anti-Racism in 2020 and Is It Enough?” EAB, November 16, 2020 <https://eab.com/research/expert-insight/strategy/higher-education-promise-anti-racism/>), no equivalent analyses or compilations of statements could be found for academic libraries.

Figure 2. Please use the 10 to 1 scales to indicate your level of agreement with each statement—a 10 equals “strongly agree” and a 1 equals “strongly disagree.”
 Percentage of respondents that strongly agree with each statement, by survey cycle.



It is also notable that confidence in personnel strategies has declined over the last year. Since 2019, a smaller share of library directors saw their equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies as well-developed, especially at the institution level; about eight percent fewer strongly agree with the statement regarding their institution. As in the 2019 survey, a greater share of library directors at doctoral institutions compared to those at other institution types strongly agreed that their equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies were well-developed, but only at the library level; 38 percent of those at doctoral universities strongly agreed, compared to 29 percent at master’s institutions and 26 percent at baccalaureate colleges.

Further, 40 percent of library directors of color were confident in their equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies,¹⁴ with 41 percent of Black directors specifically strongly agreeing.¹⁵ A smaller share of white library directors agreed (29 percent). Similarly, there was a gap in confidence between white directors and directors of color in whether their institution had well-developed equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies, with 24 percent of white directors strongly agreeing and 35 percent of directors of color strongly agreeing (31 percent of Black library directors strongly agreed). See Figure 3. Both directors of color in general and Black directors specifically are more likely to be library directors at doctoral universities. Given

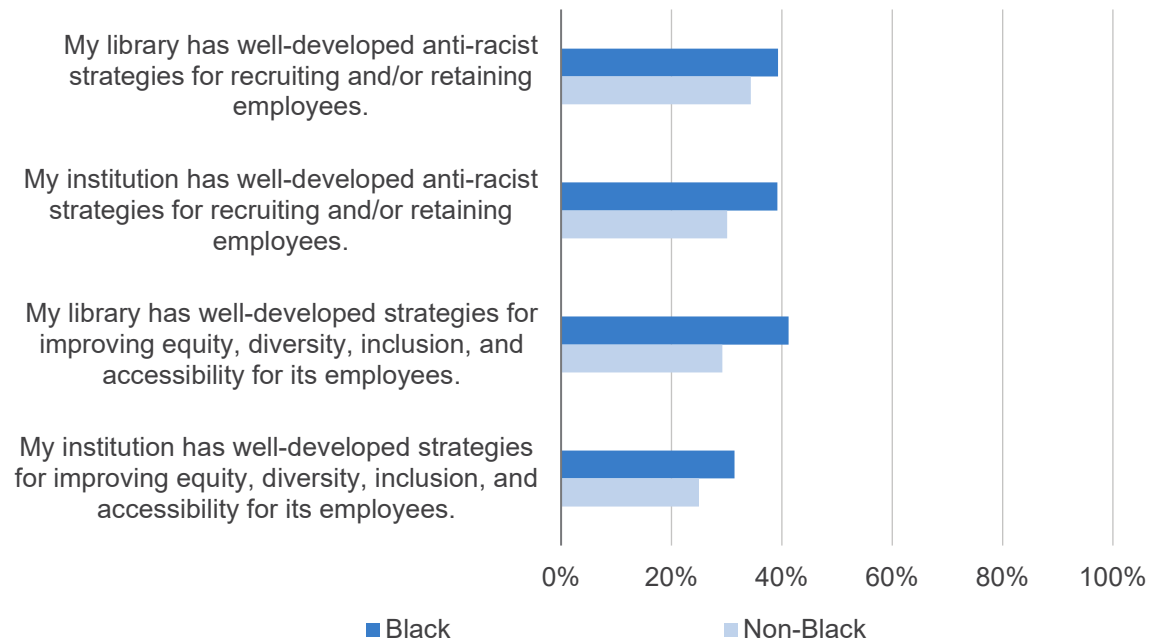
¹⁴ Here, library directors of color refer to respondents who did not solely select that they were white. Respondents who selected multiple racial-ethnic identities were included in the employees of color category even if they selected white as one of their identities.

¹⁵ We separately examined how Black directors responded to each of the questions for two reasons: 1) the recent movements for racial justice specifically sought to address police violence against Black people and 2) there were enough Black respondents in the survey (i.e. more than 30) to run statistical analysis while also maintaining the confidentiality of respondents.

that library directors at doctoral universities tend to be more confident in their equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies, this may partially explain these findings. It is also possible that that personal, identity-based experiences with the impact of racism have in part shaped how strategies are developed within the library and more broadly influenced within the parent institution.

Figure 3. Please use the 10 to 1 scales to indicate your level of agreement with each statement—a 10 equals “strongly agree” and a 1 equals “strongly disagree.”

Percentage of respondents that strongly agree with each statement, by race-ethnicity.*



*Non-Black refers to all library directors that selected a race-ethnicity category other than Black/African American. Those who selected Black/African American and another race-ethnicity group were categorized as Black.

Additionally, a smaller proportion of library directors at institutions in the Northeast were confident in their library’s strategies compared to those at institutions in the Southeast (25 percent versus 39 percent). This may be due to the Southeast’s greater racial diversity in the general population compared to the Northeast and the greater share of Black library directors specifically at Southeast institutions (17 percent) compared to in the Northeast (six percent).¹⁶ Finally, a smaller share of women, compared to men, were confident in their institution’s strategies (23 percent versus 32 percent).

¹⁶ Further, the Southeast had the greatest share of Black library directors compared to all other regions. The next greatest share was at institutions in the Southwest with 12 percent of library directors identifying as Black. In all other regions fewer than 10 percent of library directors were Black.

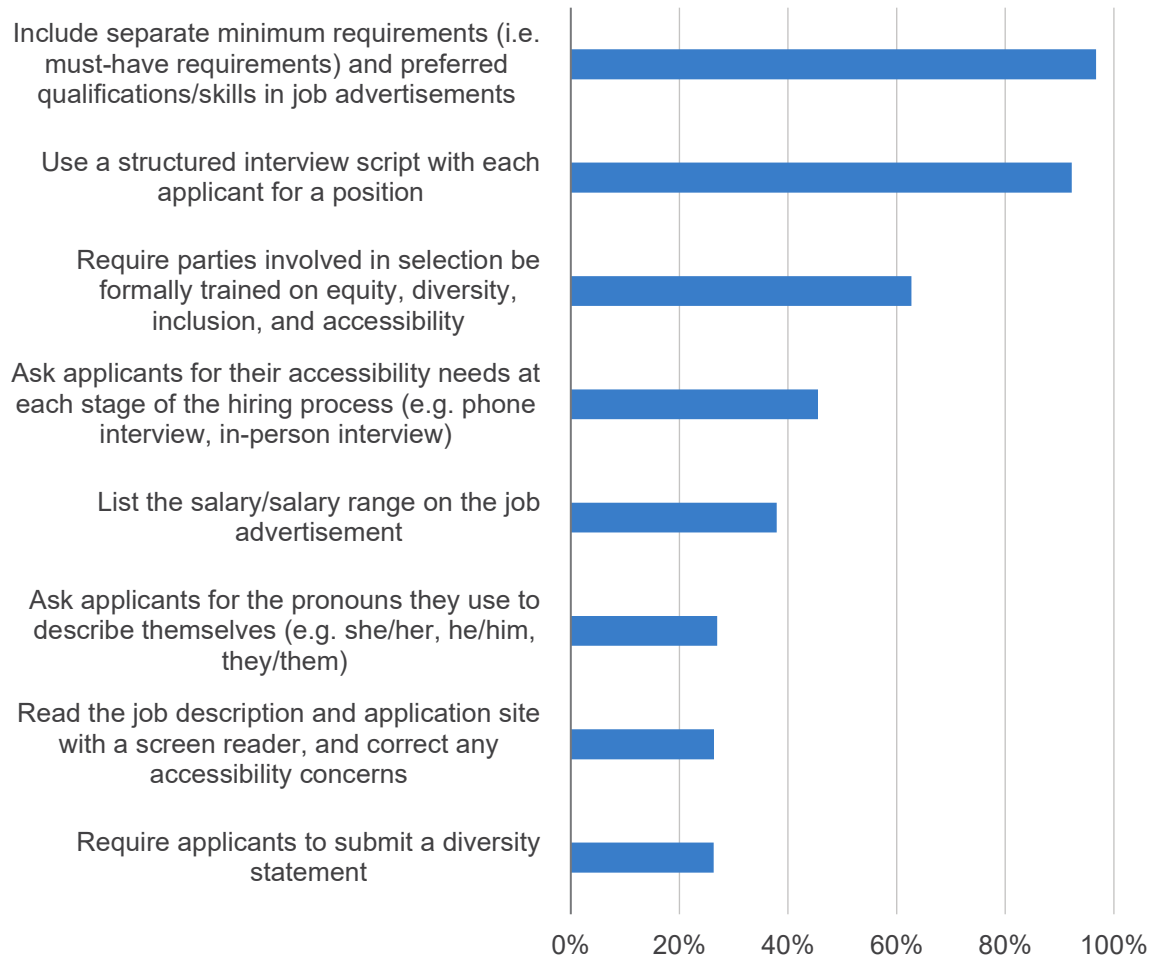
To get a sense of what some of these equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility strategies have looked like at academic libraries, we turn to the findings from our prior library director survey cycle in 2019. In that survey, fielded just months prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we asked library directors for the first time what strategies they or those involved in hiring at their libraries use when recruiting and hiring library employees. These strategies were intended to measure what actions, if any, library directors or those involved in hiring were taking to make their libraries more diverse.¹⁷

The most common practices are separating out minimum requirements and preferred skills in job advertisements and using structured interview scripts for each applicant (89 percent and 74 percent respectively). Nearly half also required parties involved in selection to be formally trained on equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Fewer than one-third utilized the remaining practices. See Figure 4. These activities are likely among those that directors reflected on while answering questions about their broader strategies and may therefore in part explain why many are not particularly confident in their personnel strategies for improving equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Given that many library leaders at the director level are not solely responsible for developing and carrying out hiring practices, collaboration with other hiring managers and human resources professionals is essential for revisiting these practices.

¹⁷ These practices were selected based on ALA recommendations and desk research (Tara Sophia Mohr, “Why Women Don’t Apply for Jobs Unless They’re 100% Qualified,” *Harvard Business Review*, August 25, 2014, <https://hbr.org/2014/08/why-women-dont-apply-for-jobs-unless-theyre-100-qualified>; DeEtta Jones, “The Inclusive Manager’s Hiring Checklist,” <https://deettajones.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/DeEtta-Jones-Inclusive-Managers-Hiring-Checklist.pdf>), feedback from advisors, as well as issues that the first author engaged with while conducting research at the University of Michigan. See “Stride,” The University of Michigan’s Advance Program, <https://advance.umich.edu/stride/>, for more resources and suggestions of best practices.

Figure 4. Generally speaking, how often do you, a hiring manager, a human resources representative, and/or members of the search committee do each of the following when recruiting and hiring library employees?

Percentage of respondents that selected “often” and “occasionally.”



Collections

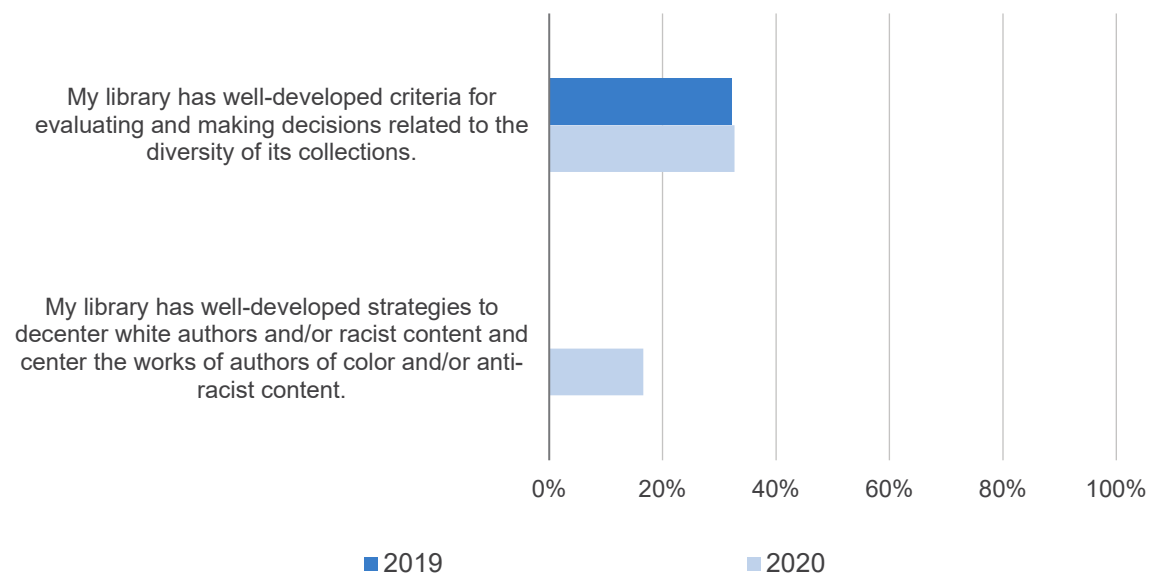
In this section, we continue to examine library leaders’ strategies to foster equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism with a focus on their strategies related to collections. In particular, we asked whether library directors believe their library has well-developed criteria for assessing the diversity of their collections, and whether they have specific strategies to diversify their collections and center resources by authors of color.

Compared to equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racist strategies related to personnel, a much smaller percentage of library directors were confident in similar strategies related to collections, especially in relation to decentering white authors and/or racist content and re-centering works by authors of color and/or anti-racist content. A total of 17 percent of library directors

considered their strategies for doing so to be well-developed. This low level of confidence was shared across respondents with a variety of individual and institutional characteristics; there were no statistically significant differences between any subgroups. These results perhaps call into question whether directors have not developed relevant strategies because they are not sufficiently valued or because, while valued, the strategies have not yet been operationalized. Of course, the impact of COVID-19 on library budgets in general and collections budgets specifically also limits the potential effectiveness of a variety of collections development strategies. See Figure 5.

Figure 5. Please use the 10 to 1 scales to indicate your level of agreement with each statement—a 10 equals “strongly agree” and a 1 equals “strongly disagree.”

Percentage of respondents that strongly agree with each statement, by survey cycle.



In 2019, we asked library directors for the first time the extent of their agreement that their library has well-developed strategies to address the diversity of their collections. In both the 2019 and 2020 surveys, a similar proportion of library directors strongly agreed with this statement (32 and 33 percent respectively). Again, there were no subgroup differences in library directors’ confidence in these strategies.

These findings are consistent with the literature about collections development and equity, diversity, and inclusion. While there has been an increased focus on personnel strategies over the past several years, collections have not received as much attention. Further, when equity, diversity, and inclusion acquisitions are discussed in the literature, the focus is typically on one

subgroup at a time (e.g. LGBTQ authors, Black authors) or specific types of collections rather than general strategies.¹⁸

Of the share of libraries that do have well-developed strategies, they typically use methodologies that focus on subject headings, reviews of book approval plans, and talking to users about gaps in collections. While these strategies can certainly increase the number of items purchased that advance diversity and anti-racism in academic libraries, how library leaders might decenter works by white authors and/or racist content—and whether they want to pursue such a strategy—remains unclear, especially at large research universities which have large collections of items, both institutional and shared.¹⁹ Rather than purchasing additional items for their collections, some library leaders have focused on addressing their current collections, particularly items in their archives and special collections.²⁰

Impact

Lastly, we focus on the reported financial impact of COVID-19 on personnel at academic libraries and their implications for representational diversity and equity. We dig into both concerns about disparate impact shared by library directors and how employees in various roles and with particular identity-based demographics have been affected by cutbacks.²¹

Very few library directors—roughly 16 percent—expressed concerns about budget cuts allocated to staffing disproportionately impacting employees of color. Percentage-wise more than twice as many Black library directors were concerned about this potential than non-Black library directors (31 percent versus 15 percent). See Figure 6. Again, this indicates a potential relationship between personal and professional awareness of the impact of race on employment decisions.

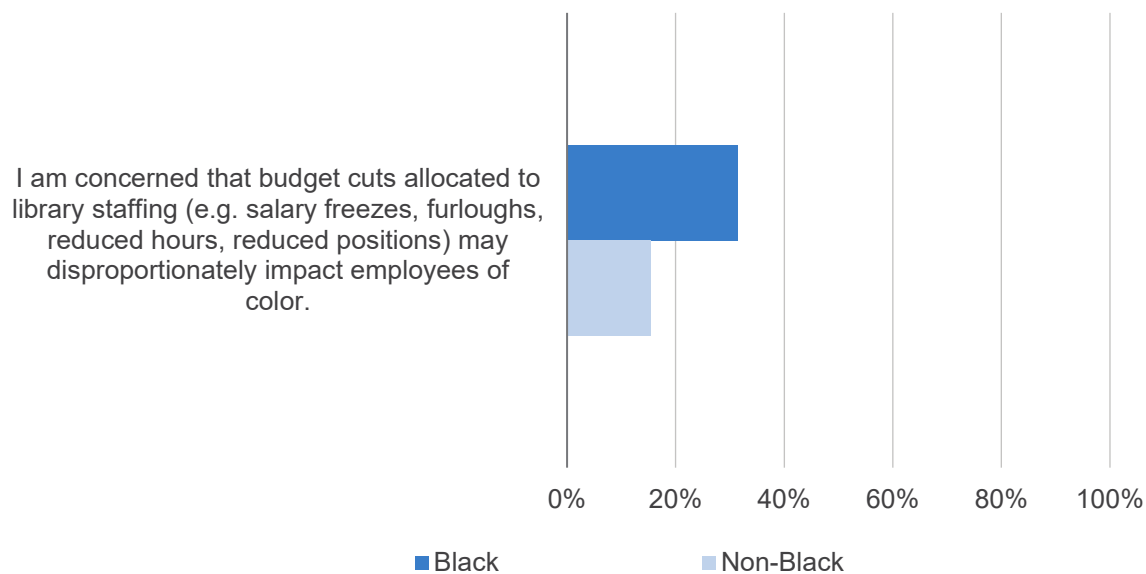
¹⁸ Scott M. Stone, "Whose Play Scripts Are Being Published? A Diversity Audit of One Library's Collection in Conversation with the Broader Publishing World," *Collection Management*, February 3, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2020.17153>.

¹⁹ Jennifer Bowers, Katherine Crowe, and Peggy Keeran, "If You Want the History of a White Man, You Go to the Library': Critiquing Our Legacy, Addressing Our Library Collection Gaps," *Collection Management*, October 31, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2017.1329104>.

²⁰ For an example, see Verónica Reyes-Escudero and J. Wendel Cox, "Survey, Understanding, and Ethical Stewardship of Indigenous Collections: A Case Study," *Collection Management*, October 31, 2017, doi: 10.1080/01462679.2017.1336503.

²¹ For a broader exploration of the financial impact of COVID-19 on academic library strategy and budgeting, see Jennifer K. Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Results from the Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2020," Ithaka S+R, 9 December 2020, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.314507>.

Figure 6. Please use the 10 to 1 scales to indicate your level of agreement with each statement—a 10 equals “strongly agree” and a 1 equals “strongly disagree.”
 Percentage of respondents that strongly agree with each statement, by race-ethnicity.*



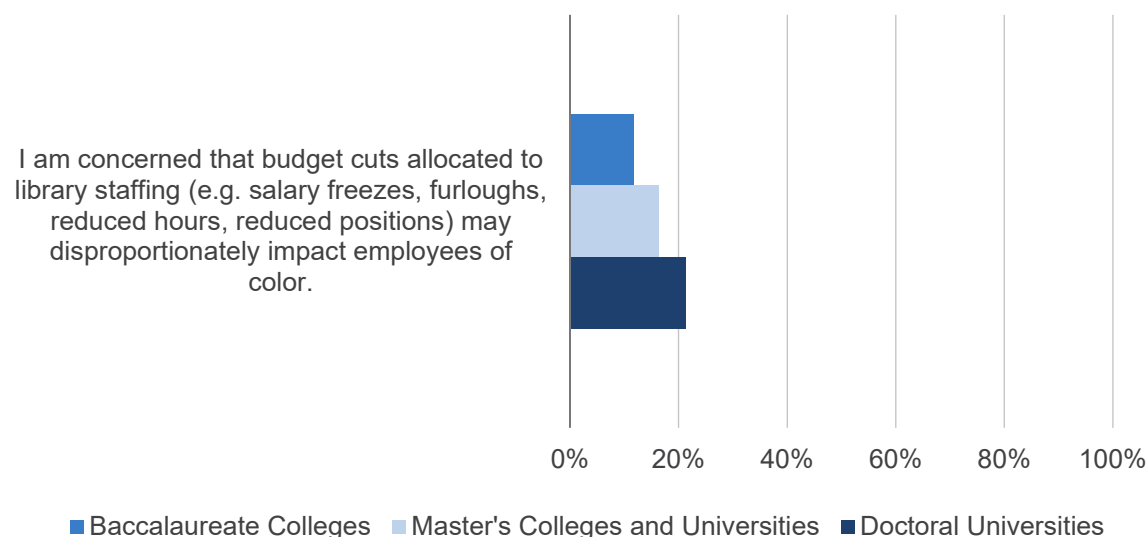
*Non-Black refers to all library directors that selected a race-ethnicity category other than Black/African American. Those who selected Black/African American and another race-ethnicity group were categorized as Black.

Additionally, a greater share of library directors at public institutions and doctoral universities were concerned that budget cuts disproportionately impacted employees of color compared to those at other institution types (21 percent at doctoral universities, 16 percent at master’s institutions, and 12 percent at baccalaureate colleges). See Figure 7. Given that library personnel budgets at doctoral universities were more impacted in the last year than those at other institution types, and given the larger staff they typically employ, it is perhaps unsurprising that these concerns were therefore greater.²² It is however notable that while concerns were greater at doctoral universities, a greater proportion of these library leaders also demonstrated confidence in their equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism strategies.

²² Jennifer K. Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "Academic Library Strategy and Budgeting During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Results from the Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2020," Ithaka S+R, 9 December 2020, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.314507>.

Figure 7. Please use the 10 to 1 scales to indicate your level of agreement with each statement—a 10 equals “strongly agree” and a 1 equals “strongly disagree.”

Percentage of respondents that strongly agree with each statement, by Carnegie Classification.



We also added a set of questions on the actual impact of budget cuts to personnel due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who indicated that their libraries furloughed or eliminated currently filled or vacant positions received a follow-up question about the impact of these cuts on employees across 22 job areas. Given greater concerns expressed by doctoral university library directors about the impact of COVID-19 cuts on employees of color, the relatively greater number of staff they oversee, and pre-existing, publicly-available data on staff demographics by job type and individual identity at ARL institutions,²³ we estimated the extent to which employees of color were actually disproportionately impacted by budget cuts at these institutions.

In 2017, our colleagues Liam Sweeney and Roger Schonfeld found that 71 percent of all employees at ARL institutions were white.²⁴ Thus, for the purposes of our present analysis, job categories with less than 71 percent white employees were considered to be disproportionately held by employees of color. These job categories included facilities/operations (62 percent white), human resources including diversity roles (64 percent), finance/development (64 percent), access services including circulation, ILL, stacks, management roles (66 percent), content acquisitions (68 percent), cataloging, metadata, and resource description (70 percent), and assessment (70 percent).

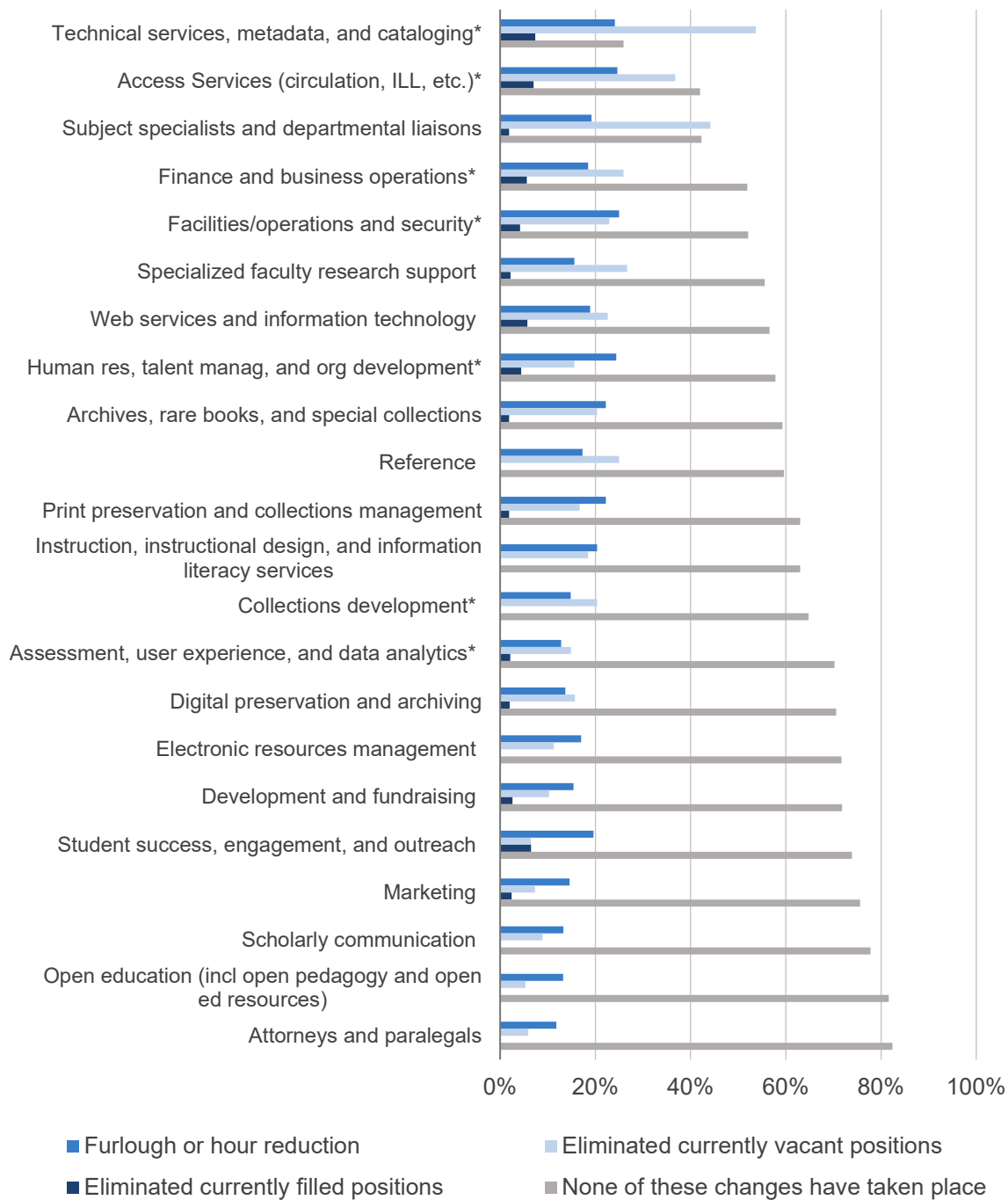
²³ Roger C. Schonfeld and Liam Sweeney, “Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity: Members of the Association of Research Libraries: Employee Demographics and Director Perspectives,” *Ithaka S+R*, August 30, 2017, <https://sr.ithaka.org/publications/inclusion-diversity-and-equity-arl/>.

²⁴ Ibid.

Comparing these job types to those most impacted by recent furloughs and elimination of currently filled and vacant positions at ARL institutions, we find that four of the top five most impacted job categories (technical services, metadata, and cataloging, access services, finance and business operations, and facilities/operations and security) all map onto job categories with relatively more employees of color. See Figure 8. Thus, at least at ARL institutions and potentially more broadly, it does appear that employees of color have been disproportionately impacted.

Figure 8. In light of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, what changes to employee positions in each of the following areas have been made? Please exclude student workers in responding to each item.

Percentage of respondents at ARL institutions that selected each item.*



*Items with asterisks represent job categories with a greater than average percentage of employees of color.

In addition to examining the impact of COVID-19 budget cuts on employees of color, we also looked at the likelihood that women were disproportionately impacted given recent national reports of job losses specifically impacting women.²⁵ At ARL libraries, 61 percent of employees overall were women. Only five job categories had a smaller percentage of women: security (27 percent), technology (30 percent), Maker space/design lab (35 percent), facilities/operations (36 percent), and access services (59 percent). Comparing these to the job categories most impacted by budget cuts, it appears likely that men and women at ARL institutions have been fairly evenly impacted by COVID-19 budget cuts.

²⁵ For example, Annalyn Kurtz, “The US Economy lost 140,000 jobs in December. All of them were held by women,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/economy/women-job-losses-pandemic/index.html>.

Appendix A: Methodology

As in previous cycles, we generated a list of US institutions from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education database to sample from in the 2020 survey.²⁶ One individual from each institution was chosen as the contact person for the survey. Our final list of contacts included 1,504 library directors.²⁷ Of the 1,504 individuals we attempted to contact, 31 emails bounced or failed. This brought our total population of invited directors to 1,473.

An initial invitation and three reminder messages were sent in September 2020. Roger Schonfeld, director of Ithaka S+R's Libraries, Scholarly Communication, and Museums Program, Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, manager of surveys and research at Ithaka S+R, and Trevor A. Dawes, vice provost for libraries and museums and May Morris University Librarian at the University of Delaware, were the signatories of the messages.

Of the 1,473 directors who received emails inviting them to participate in our survey, we received completed responses from 638, for an overall response rate of 43 percent. As in previous cycles, response rates from doctoral universities were highest. The data in this report have not been weighted or otherwise transformed in any way, so we ask the reader to bear in mind that response rates differed to some degree by institutional type.

The Ithaka S+R Library Survey 2019, as well as previous cycles in 2016, 2013, and 2010, served as a starting point for the 2020 cycle. A group of external advisors provided input on current trends in academic libraries—most importantly the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and movements for racial justice—and corresponding questions were added to the instrument. Since we asked survey participants to respond during the COVID-19 pandemic, we also cut a number of questions to reduce the length of the survey. After incorporating feedback from advisors on a draft instrument, we tested the survey via cognitive interview with six additional library directors and made final revisions based on their feedback.²⁸ The final survey included randomization on the order of items within question sets as well as display logic on a few items such that they would only display to participants if they selected particular responses.

Finally, we employed a variety of techniques to analyze the data for this report. To identify the distribution of responses at a high level, we ran frequency or descriptive analyses (averages) on each response option for each survey question. These were computed on both the aggregate and

²⁶ We included institutions from nine “basic” Carnegie Classifications: Baccalaureate Colleges: Mixed Baccalaureate/Associate's, Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields, Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus, Master's Colleges & Universities: Small Programs, Master's Colleges & Universities: Medium Programs, Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs, Doctoral/Professional Universities, Doctoral Universities: High Research Activity, and Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity.

²⁷ To get this total, we excluded 52 institutions for a variety of reasons: we were unable to collect contact information, the institution closed, the library director position was vacant, or the library did not have a director.

²⁸ Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, “Employing Cognitive Interviews for Questionnaire Testing: Preparing to Field the US Faculty Survey” *Ithaka S+R*, June 1, 2018, <https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/employing-cognitive-interviews-for-questionnaire-testing/>.

subgroup data (e.g. by Carnegie Classification). These analyses were used to create the figures in this report.²⁹

Additional subgroup analyses were performed for groups with at least 30 respondents. Using these, we ran independent samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA with Tukey's HSD tests, and chi-square analyses when appropriate. Results of these analyses are reported throughout this report if they are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. We have also noted the frequencies of responses over time, paying particular attention to large differences.

Datasets from the 2010, 2013, 2016, and 2019 cycles of the Library Survey have been deposited with ICPSR for long-term preservation and access.³⁰ We intend to deposit the 2020 dataset in a similar fashion. Please contact us directly at research@ithaka.org if we can provide any assistance in accessing and working with the underlying data.

²⁹ In figures based on frequencies, we display responses at the high end of the scales used. For items with 10-point scales, frequencies of the top three response options (8-10) are displayed. We considered these responses to indicate strong agreement. Similarly, for items with 4—7 point scales, we display frequencies of the top two response options.

³⁰ Datasets from the Ithaka S+R series of surveys may be found at "Ithaka S R Surveys of Higher Education Series," ICPSR, <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/series/226/studies>.

Appendix B: Participant Demographics

Population Demographic	Frequency	Percentage
Carnegie Classification		
Baccalaureate Colleges: Mixed Baccalaureate/Associate's	13	2%
Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields	57	9%
Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus	106	17%
Master's Colleges & Universities: Small Programs	35	6%
Master's Colleges & Universities: Medium Programs	73	11%
Master's Colleges & Universities: Larger Programs	137	21%
Doctoral/Professional Universities	51	8%
Doctoral Universities: High Research Activity	71	11%
Doctoral Universities: Very High Research Activity	79	12%
Sector		
Public, 4-year or above	264	42%
Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above	360	58%
Current course status		
Classes are being held primarily in person	85	13%
Classes are being held roughly evenly online and in person (including "hyflex" / hybrid models)	329	52%
Classes are being held primarily online	200	32%
Other (please specify):	21	3%
Current library status		
Library/libraries open usual fall semester/term hours	170	27%
Single / only library location open but hours are now limited compared to usual	239	38%
Multiple-location library open but hours are now limited and/or some locations closed compared to usual	130	20%
Library / all libraries closed	58	9%

Population Demographic	Frequency	Percentage
Library hours have expanded compared to usual	0	0%
Other (please specify):	39	6%
Enrollment changes		
Increase (of any size)	149	23%
No change	91	14%
1-4% decrease	189	30%
5-9% decrease	96	15%
10-14% decrease	44	7%
15-19% decrease	15	2%
20-24% decrease	7	1%
25% decrease or more	4	1%
Not sure / enrollment for the fall semester/term has not yet been determined	41	6%
Job title		
Director	333	52%
Dean	196	31%
Chief, head, college, or university librarian	103	16%
Other (e.g. vice provost, vice president, professor)	59	9%
Direct supervisor		
Provost, chief academic officer, or vice president of academic	511	80%
Deputy/Assistant/Associate provost, deputy/assistant/associate chief academic officer, or deputy/assistant/associate dean of academic affairs	73	12%
Chief Information Officer (CIO)	16	3%
College or university president	10	2%
Other	26	4%

Approximately what percentage of employees at your library are unionized?

0%	458	72%
1-25%	34	5%
25-50%	34	5%
51-75%	29	5%
76-100%	82	13%

Do librarians at your library have faculty status?

Yes	350	55%
No	213	34%
Other (please specify):	72	11%

Teaching and research balance

My institution is primarily focused on teaching	227	36%
My institution is somewhat more focused on teaching	201	32%
My institution has an equal focus on research and teaching	138	22%
My institution is somewhat more focused on research	47	7%
My institution is primarily focused on research	22	4%

Years as director at current institution

Less than 2 years	133	21%
2-5 years	246	39%
6-10 years	132	21%
11-15 years	62	10%
More than 15 years	63	10%

Previous position		
Interim director	120	19%
Director at another institution	154	24%
Associate university/college librarian	144	23%
Department head	87	14%
Other position in higher education	28	4%
Other position outside of higher education	21	3%
Other	81	12%
Age		
22-34	15	2%
35-44	71	11%
45-54	203	33%
55-64	216	35%
65 and over	113	18%
Gender		
Man	221	36%
Woman	395	64%
Non-binary	3	<1%
Another option not listed here	1	<1%
Transgender		
Do you identify as transgender? - Yes	3	<1%

Race-ethnicity		
White	526	83%
Black or African American	51	8%
Hispanic, Latino, Latina, or Latinx	15	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	9	1%
Asian or Asian American	8	1%
Middle Eastern or Northern African	5	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	<1%
Another option not listed here	11	2%

Appendix C: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Anti-Racism Strategies

Figure 9. Please use the 10 to 1 scales to indicate your level of agreement with each statement—a 10 equals “strongly agree” and a 1 equals “strongly disagree.”

Percentage of respondents that highly agree with each statement.

