

# Decolonizing LIS Journal Publishing in International Context: Addressing the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Development Gap

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## ABSTRACT

In moving beyond words and taking action on diversity in the library and information field globally, equity, inclusion, accessibility and development need to be addressed. Diversity has been espoused to address inequality in our field including the lack of diverse representation in our professional and faculty ranks; women, ethno-racial minorities and developing nations being disadvantaged in science publishing; BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) voices not represented in our collections; and discrimination, harassment and lack of accommodation in the workplace and in education. Inequality is experienced globally and has been created and maintained by systems and structures that advantage and privilege some (mainstream society or majority culture), and discriminate against others. Recently, and especially, since the 2020 murder of George Floyd, there have been calls to decolonize knowledge and the academy as a strategy that recognizes systemic barriers, and critically engages and deconstructs inequitable structures in knowledge systems. What implications do decolonizing journal publishing in library and information science (LIS) have for equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and development (EDIAD), and how do we go about doing this in an international context?

The issues raised by these questions are being engaged from an antiracism and inclusion lens by different organizations and coalitions. For example, the Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Communications (C4DISC) <https://c4disc.org/>, initiated in June 2017 by representatives of 10 trade and professional associations in scholarly communications, which aims to address diversity and inclusion issues in scholarly publishing, has published four important toolkits for equity <https://c4disc.org/toolkits-for-equity/>, namely: Guidelines on Inclusive Language and Images in Scholarly Communication; the Antiracism Toolkit for Allies; the Antiracism Toolkit for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; and the Antiracism Toolkit

for Organizations. To understand the realities of systemic oppression, The Scholarly Kitchen published “On Being Excluded: Testimonies by People of Color in Scholarly Publishing” (Part I in April 2018 <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2018/04/04/excluded-testimonies-people-color-scholarly-publishing/> and Part II in May 2018 <https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2018/05/10/excluded-testimonies-people-color-scholarly-publishing-part-ii/>). In 2022, a learning lab at the Annual American Library Association (ALA) Conference, explored individual and collective actions to decolonize LIS journal publishing internationally.

This panel will focus on examining ways to decolonize LIS journal publishing internationally, in content and practice, through bearing witness to publishing injustice, identification of factors that create inequalities in publishing, and development of strategies to decolonize LIS journal publishing. The panel will set the context, introduce past work, engage the participants in critical discussion of bias in LIS journal publishing that will challenge them to consider solutions, which will be followed by interactive engagement on short-term (1-2y), mid-term (3-5y), and long-term (>5y) actions to decolonize LIS journal publishing in international context. The panel will be co-facilitated by the co-editors of *Library Trends*, and the speakers will include editors and authors who will provide testimonies and share their expertise.

Jaya Raju will bring a global south perspective in deconstructing inequitable ‘colonial’ structures, systemic barriers and injustices in current LIS journal publishing, and within this context, problematize the concept of decolonization. "Decolonization demands more than understanding the predatory modes of settler colonialism for resistance to them (as is often the stated goal within settler colonial studies), but also the resurgence of alternative modes of being, alternative futures." (Ritskes, 2016)

Clara M. Chu will present the outcomes from the 2022 ALA learning lab engagement, sharing the short-, mid-, and long-term actions that LIS professionals and stakeholders prioritized. This data will set the context to stimulate continued discussion in the proposed session, and from which a complementary action agenda can be created.

Bharat Mehra will interrogate past injustices and current systemic inequalities in LIS journal publishing and discuss actual/potential actions, drawing on select experiences and multiple perspectives from the vantage positionality as existing member of several journal editorial boards, author/co-author of >180 publications on EDIA/international social justice content, book Series Editor of *Advances in Librarianship* (Emerald Group Publishing), PI/co-PI on EDIA-related grants, and as the EBSCO Endowed Chair in Social Justice and Professor in a white-entrenched institution.

All three speakers, in presenting their unique and diverse perspectives and expert knowledge, will address questions associated with the implications of decolonizing journal publishing in LIS for equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and development, and how to navigate the challenging international terrain for transformational change. Robust interaction with the audience of academics, researchers, and professionals will also allow for engagement with these important questions to generate effective solutions and actions.

Educators, scholars, students, and other stakeholders in LIS are invited to engage in this session to understand past injustices, acknowledge current systemic inequalities, and spell out ways to decolonize LIS journal publishing. They will also participate in setting an action agenda

where LIS journal publishing is a generative and transformative space that embraces multiple ways of knowing and counters suppression, subversion, resistance and silencing of non-Western epistemologies, non-scientific methods, and other modes of knowledge production.

## **REFERENCE**

Ritskes, E. (2016). Beyond and Against White Settler Colonialism in Palestine: Fugitive Futurities in Amir Nizar Zuabi's: "The Underground Ghetto City of Gaza". *Cultural Studies*, 17(1) 78-86. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708616640561>

## **ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS**

print culture; scholarly communications; publishing; social justice.

## **AUTHOR KEYWORDS**

diversity; equity; inclusion; decolonization; international.

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