

# DEAI Practices in Museums

## The Study

The CCLI (Cultural Competence Learning Institute) National Landscape Study sought to map the current state of organizational-level diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) practices in U.S. museums.

## Why We Did It

CCLI (Cultural Competence Learning Institute) sought to obtain a clearer picture of practices, gaps, and progress in advancing equity and inclusion. Our ultimate goal was to begin building shared expectations and metrics about what DEAI practice in museums can and should look like.

## What We Learned

Museums report that DEAI is an organizational priority, but have not taken strategic, consistent action at an organizational level foundational enough to support and achieve enduring equity and inclusion.

## What are the ways in which museums practice DEAI?

There are currently no set DEAI industry standards for museums, so this study identified potential practices and organized them to create potential benchmarks. These indicators of successful DEAI practices can be categorized under the four dimensions of Public-Facing, Internal, Foundational, and Cross-Functional practices.



## Services & Products

**Museums must integrate a range of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) strategies into their core work in order to create more inclusive exhibits, programs, and events.**

**Are museums integrating a range of DEAI strategies that develop and support more inclusive visitor experience into their regular practices?**

The recent CCLI (Cultural Competence Learning Institute) report, *CCLI National Landscape Study: The State of DEAI Practices in Museums*, presents a pivotal benchmarking analysis using data collected from 580 U.S.-based museums of all sizes and disciplines.

JUST **50%**



OF RESPONDENTS

always offer full physical access to exhibits, programs, and special events.

EVEN FEWER:

<1/3

report always practicing other possible DEAI strategies, like those described below.

### ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

Museums can create more inclusive visitor experiences by integrating DEAI strategies across their work rather than implementing them on a case-by-case basis. Below are some promising strategies drawn from the landscape study for building equity and inclusion across museum experiences. Use this information to benchmark your own work and embed these DEAI strategies into the core practices of your organization.

- ➔ **Offer full physical access (e.g., auditory, wheelchair access) to experiences and consider opportunities for sensory-friendly (e.g., low noise) experiences for visitors.** Only about half report always offering full physical access for programs (59%), special events (57%), and exhibits (52%). And even fewer—only about a quarter—report always offering sensory-friendly access to programs (30%), exhibits (27%), and special events (26%).
- ➔ **Commit to ensuring multilingual access across museum experiences.** About a quarter of respondents provide multilingual access (e.g., written or verbal translations) at admissions (26%) and in wayfinding signage (24%). Only 18% report always doing this for exhibits, 15% for programs, and just 12% for special events.
- ➔ **Develop strategies for addressing topics that have historically been suppressed (e.g., racism, Indigenous science, genocide).** Only a quarter (26%) of museums report always doing this in exhibits, and even fewer in programs (23%) or special events (18%).
- ➔ **Include narratives and voices from underrepresented communities across museum offerings.** Just under a quarter (23%) report always doing this for programs and that number drops even more when it comes to exhibits (19%) or special events (17%).



CCLI (Cultural Competence Learning Institute) guides museum staff as they catalyze diversity and inclusion efforts in their institutions. CCLI believes that leaders reside at every level of an organization and the program works with museums of all sizes and disciplines to center equity.