



## Promote Inclusivity, Diversity, and Equity with Universally Accessible Resources

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Inclusive, equitable options have always [been needed](#) in higher education—but the pandemic is escalating [demand](#).

Recent developments, like the American Library Association’s (ALA) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) [scorecard](#) and California’s ethnic studies course [requirement](#), are sure to add fuel to the fire.

Academic libraries have adapted to meet the needs of students and faculty throughout the pandemic—and are well equipped to support missions of inclusivity, diversity, and equity. As higher education institutions look to broaden and support a more diverse student body, as well as become attractive employers to a more diverse pool of faculty applicants, libraries and their collections will play an increasingly important role.

Universally accessible resources, including academic databases, primary sources, and eBook collections, provide a significant opportunity for colleges and universities to promote equity and inclusion.

### Enrich online and hybrid courses with digital academic databases

The pandemic has reinforced the need for accessible library services and resources. When institutions needed to pivot quickly, digital solutions—like the [Gale Access Program](#), a combination of databases, references, eBooks, and primary sources—provided much-needed flexibility.

A [survey](#) conducted by Ithaka S+R found that “in five years, [library] directors expect their budget allocations toward online journals and databases, e-books, and streaming media to increase.”

Modern academic databases offer features that support accessibility, like on-demand translation and text-to-speech. They also enable students to search across disciplines to find the content they need—anytime and from any location.

Digital databases expand access to information, ensuring that students enrolled in online and hybrid courses are getting the same value as those who choose to attend in person.

[more](#) →

## Empower researchers with digital primary sources

[Primary sources](#) bring the thoughts, words, and actions of the past into the present—enhancing instruction by helping students take research one step further.

Seth Cayley, vice president of Gale’s global academic products, [explains](#):

“By examining primary documents, students can unearth historically marginalised [*sic*] voices that are not usually taught in mainstream curricula, such as those of LGBTQ+ [*sic*] and minority ethnic groups. Archives that provide access to a wide variety of voices and cultures are critical to preventing history being told through a narrow lens and helping diverse student groups see themselves represented in the past.”

Primary sources offer students the unique opportunity to live through history, and connect past events to modern social, political, and cultural issues.

## Represent campus communities through diverse library collections

A [report](#) from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) found that while nearly 33 percent of undergraduate students are Black or Hispanic, only 9.5 percent of higher education faculty identify with these groups.

The report [urges](#) higher education institutions to examine their recruitment and retention practices through an equity-minded lens. As part of this practice, universities should ensure that their library collections are representative of the campus community.

[Guidance from ALA](#) stipulates that developing a diverse collection requires:

- Selecting content in multiple formats.
- Considering resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers.
- Seeking content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups.
- Evaluating how diverse collection resources are cataloged, labeled, and displayed.
- Including content in all of the languages used in the community that the library serves, when possible.
- Providing resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities.

To achieve this, institutions can leverage digital collections focused on diversity—such as those included in Gale’s [Archives Unbound](#) collections.

With literature playing an increasingly important role in supporting campus-wide DEI initiatives, like “[Campus Read](#)” events, institutions should provide access to content in multiple formats—eBooks included.

To help students and faculty uncover diverse voices and perspectives, the [Gale Literature Resource Center](#), [Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints](#), and [Gale In Context: Biography](#) platforms allow users to search by nationality, gender, and more.

## Reinforce the value of academic libraries

The services and resources provided through academic libraries are a cornerstone of higher education institutions. Throughout the pandemic, students, faculty, and staff relied on the expertise of librarians to fulfill their content needs—a trend that’s likely here to stay.

To drive enrollment and retention in this [competitive](#) landscape, institutions will need to offer resources that benefit the entire campus community—pandemic relief funding provides an opportunity to achieve this.

Reaffirming a commitment to support research and learning at all academic levels, the [Gale Access Program](#) is a cost-effective way for institutions to expand access, prioritize inclusivity, and promote equity.

To learn more about the Gale Access Program, visit [gale.com/gap](https://gale.com/gap).