Practicing intentionality in team and project work

Vacek, Rachel; Burkhardt, Heidi

http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/150634
Practicing intentionality in team and project work

Rachel Vacek
Head, Design & Discovery
University of Michigan
@vacekrae

Heidi Burkhardt
Web Project Manager & Content Strategist
University of Michigan
@heidi_sb

IDEAL ‘19 Conference • August 7, 2019
Outline

Introduction
Strategies
Being a model

Website Redesign
DEIA Statement:

https://umlib.us/wr-deia
Introduction
Web Presence Steering Committee

Steward and champion a clear vision for the library’s public facing web presence

A parent committee to teams that oversee:
- Library’s main website
- Web content and governance
- Intranet
- Discovery tools and access
Website Redesign Project Team

Make the thing

The redesigned site will:

- Invite and connect with our users
- Enable user engagement with the full breadth of resources that our library offers
- Adhere to current and emerging standards for accessibility and user experience
- Align with efforts to transform physical spaces
Why we developed our DEIA Statement

Espouse and elevate principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in our work

Why:

- Received constructive criticism about lack of diversity in teams
- Accessibility, user research, inclusive language, etc., was built into the project from the beginning
- Attention to committee formation and approaches was mixed
Considerations

Document and share our general approach to elevating DEIA principles and ensure they inform and accompany all stages of a project.

Questions we asked ourselves:

- How should we engage with the criticism we received?
- Not all diversity is visible, but is this an adequate response?
- How do we avoid tokenism?
- How do we adjust within existing limitations?
DEIA Statement - Outline

- Statement Purpose
- Team Structure and Engagement
  - Team Norms and Project Charter
  - Diversity of Membership
  - Inclusive Communication: Internal Focus
- User-Focused Methods and Practices
  - User Research and Usability Testing
  - Persona Development
  - Accessibility for Everyone
  - Inclusive Content
  - Equitable Access
- Resources
Strategies
Project management for humans
Project Charter and Team Norms

What we’re working towards and how we’ll get there together

Includes:

- Overview of the project
- Team structure, team members and roles
- Communication and meetings
- How we track our work
- Shared values
Internal communication strategy

Build trust and promote transparency throughout the organization

Methods:

- Use a variety of communication channels
- Practice awareness of frequency
- Leverage informal networks with intentionality
- Embrace change management best practices
Assessment is DEIA work

Integrating DEIA principles in how we measure success

Metrics include:
- Usability
- Accessibility
- Mobile experience
- Site performance
User research approach

Build empathy for and capture the diversity of our community, both users and staff, through research and testing.

Methods:
- Conduct studies to learn about needs across a range of backgrounds and use cases
- Use a variety of recruitment strategies
- Develop persona groups
Being a model
Sharing the DEIA Statement

Seek out expertise, be open to feedback, and strive for transparency

What we did:

- Sought feedback from Diversity and Inclusion Specialist and Accessibility Specialist
- Shared with Library Diversity Council and Digital Accessibility Team
- Held Brown Bag in May 2019
Being a model

Practice intentionality in elevating DEIA principles when creating teams and doing project work

Who’s adapting the approach in our library:

- Deans’ Office
- Library Service Design Program
Thank you for being here!

Rachel Vacek
rvacek@umich.edu

Heidi Burkhardt
heidisb@umich.edu

Website Redesign DEIA Statement:
https://umlib.us/wr-deia