

Recruiting for Cultural Competency: A Content Analysis of Archives Job Postings

Helen Wong Smith, Dawn Schmitz,
and Cyndi Shein, with Lisa Schmitz

ABSTRACT

Professional library and archives associations recognize the value of cultural competency skills in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). This study analyzes a sample of nearly 500 archival job postings to gauge the degree to which job postings demonstrate the employers' awareness of and commitment to cultural competency in their recruiting practices. The central finding is that only 7 percent of job ads in the sample included knowledge, skills, or abilities relating to cultural competency among the requirements for working in an archives-related position. Thus, the study strongly suggests that the value the archives profession places on cultural competency is rarely reflected in the qualifications candidates who wish to work in archives are expected to have. This problem is most evident in job ads for technical services positions, in the South and Midwest sections of the country, and in nonacademic employment sectors. The authors provide recommendations for hiring practices that further a hiring institution's commitment to DEIA through the adoption of cultural competency as a framework for recruitment and interviewing.

© Helen Wong Smith, Dawn Schmitz, and Cyndi Shein, with Lisa Schmitz.



KEY WORDS

Access, Archives profession, Cultural humility, Diversity, Equity,
Hiring, Inclusion, Intercultural competency, Recruitment

Archives are often thought of as society's collective memory.¹ Yet lately, archivists have begun to come to terms with how the profession's demographics fail to reflect society at large and the impact this lack of diversity has on the collective memory of our communities and cultures. This introspection has resulted in calls for diverse collecting practices, reparative description, outreach and public service considerations, and a myriad of revisions to policies and practices in the archival profession.

To these ends, in 2009 the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Council directed a subgroup to "revisit and reword the activities associated with the [Strategic Plan's] Diversity Priority, Outcome #4, which dealt with issues of retention and diversifying the profession." This subgroup thus produced action C to "develop a *cultural competencies framework* [emphasis added] as it relates to archivists and the archives profession," which was approved by the Council. The subgroup's support statement for action C directed the development of a "series of concrete tools, training, and practical steps that would help SAA and the profession become more hospitable to archivists from a variety of backgrounds."² Cultural competency, which forms the basis of these tools, is a framework used to advance one's ability to function with awareness, knowledge, and interpersonal skill when engaging with people of different backgrounds, assumptions, beliefs, values, and behaviors.³

Acceptance of the cultural competency framework by the archives profession is evinced not only by SAA's strategic planning activities but also by several initiatives undertaken in the past decade addressing a long-recognized monoculture in our profession.⁴ Moreover, a recognition of the benefits of cultural competency in archives has recently inspired training, and its professional value is evidenced in many areas, including

- a day-long cultural competency workshop offered by SAA's continuing education program,⁵
- the establishment of cultural competency as a new domain by the Academy of Certified Archivists,⁶ and
- the inclusion of cultural competency as a component of the Council of State Archivists' BACKER: Building Archival Capacity for Keeping Electronic Records project, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.⁷

The importance of cultural competency is widely recognized not only among archivists but also across the library and information science (LIS) professions.⁸ Scholarly literature has also recommended incorporating these principles into the areas of archival education, appraisal and acquisition, descriptive practices, workforce diversity and retention, community relations, and collaboration.

Given the significance that archivists place on cultural competency as a key component of addressing issues of retention and diversifying the profession, it is logical to seek aspects of cultural competency among the profession's expected

qualifications. The purpose of the present study is to glean insights into the profession's dedication to cultural competency by considering the recruiting practices of organizations that employ archivists, using public job announcements as a yardstick. The most striking finding of an analysis of 499 such announcements is that only 7 percent of job ads for archivist positions list knowledge, skills, or abilities relating to cultural competency among the requirements. This suggests that, in actual recruitment practices for archivists, cultural competency is not prioritized to the extent that might be expected, given the professional emphasis on its importance.

This study was undertaken with an awareness that the degree to which an organization values cultural competency and implements its concepts in the workplace can be seen from multiple angles, including student and employee cultural awareness education, outreach to and support of marginalized community archives, reparative description practices, recruitment of candidates from underrepresented groups, support and retention of employees of color, and many other practices outside the scope of this study. Although job announcements cannot provide a comprehensive picture of an organization's progress along the cultural competency continuum, they do provide insight into the knowledge, skills, and abilities that archives workers are expected to possess. When considered in combination with other indicators (such as those mentioned previously), the results of this study can contribute to a broader understanding of the profession's progress and where there is still need for greater effort.

This article begins with a discussion of how cultural competency has been viewed and defined in the library and information science professions and continues with a review of the professional literature, focusing on the archives and library workforce and work environments in relation to marginalized groups. It then focuses on the research methods and findings of an examination of archives job announcements before offering recommendations and a call to action.

Cultural Competency in Archives and Allied Professions

The concept of cultural competency originated within the fields of social work, counseling psychology, and health care with emphasis on working with underrepresented races and ethnicities.⁹ The American Psychological Association has broadly defined cultural competence as "the ability to understand, appreciate, and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own."¹⁰ The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's definition expands the concept to encompass the organizational level as well as the interpersonal:

Cultural and linguistic competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. "Culture" refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions,

customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. "Competence" implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities.¹¹

In 2007, the American Library Association (ALA) Committee on Diversity successfully recommended that the ALA Policy on Diversity include goals for inclusive and culturally competent library and information services.¹² The definition of cultural competency that was included echoed many elements similar to the health counseling fields: "the acceptance and respect for diversity, continuing self-assessment regarding culture, and the ongoing development of knowledge, resources, and service models that work towards effectively meeting the needs of diverse populations."¹³ In 2012, the Association of College and Research Libraries explicitly cited the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) as offering the basic framework for its concept of cultural competence. The NASW states:

Cultural competence refers to the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, spiritual traditions, immigration status, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.¹⁴

Continuing to build on these definitions, scholars within the LIS fields have noted that cultural competency involves an awareness of one's own culture and the ability and willingness to gain an understanding of others' cultures. Patricia Montiel-Overall et al. state that cultural competency involves

the capacity to recognize the significance of culture in one's own life and the lives of others; to acquire and respectfully use knowledge of diverse ethnic and cultural groups' beliefs, values, attitudes, practices, communication patterns, and assets to strengthen LIS programs and services through increased community participation.¹⁵

In the field of archives, scholars have also noted the importance of self-awareness, a concept that is foundational in Ellen Engseth's framework:

Cultural competency begins with an awareness of self; this self-cultural analysis reveals biases and values, among other things. Cultural competency is firmly process-oriented, meaning it emphasizes growth, continuing work, and action. And the framework includes a concept of a continuum on which to locate oneself. In general, scholars and practitioners across disciplines agree that cultural competency is the management of human interactions *across our differences*, with results of more appropriate and effective outcomes at the individual, relational, group, and organizational levels.¹⁶

Many archivists have emphasized the importance of recognizing that cultural competency is a continual learning process. In his 2016 presidential address to the Society of American Archivists, Dennis Meissner stated:

The fact is that we all occupy some location along this continuum of cultural competence. And there should be no shame associated with the particular address that we happen to occupy right now. To be sure, our position is dynamic and tends to shift throughout our lives as we gain experience, learn, and grow.¹⁷

In a similar vein, Dominique Luster emphasizes the elements of continuous learning and curiosity, deeply rooted in humility, as integral to the concept of cultural competency:

This competency is developed over time. It's something that you practice. It's something that you train for. . . . It's something that we tune over time with an attitude of curiosity, with an attitude of humility and open-mindedness, and respect. And tolerance for just simply not knowing and for being okay with growing and being okay with asking more questions.¹⁸

The idea that gaining cultural competence is a continual process rather than a fixed event is also expressed by Nathan Sentance when discussing cultural competency training in academic libraries in Australia. Sentance notes that this practice

also complements the First Nations' idea that for non-indigenous allies, cultural competency or cultural awareness should be seen as an ongoing journey rather than an achievement. . . . You don't just become culturally competent, you're in a constant process of increasing your understanding.¹⁹

The need for a continual process of self-awareness and growth is similarly articulated by K. L. White, who notes the importance of self-reflexivity throughout the process of building cultural competency and gaining knowledge of other cultures respectfully. Writing specifically of archival educators in the context of addressing the needs of marginalized communities, White asserts:

Taking a dialogic approach, which also requires reflexivity, will be useful in that [archival] educators may realize that they need to gain cultural competency (as much as is possible, permitted or appropriate without causing disrespect) by spending time with community members to learn about the object of knowledge and gain a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the group's perspective.²⁰

While self-awareness, personal growth, and respect are integral to the concept of cultural competency, their application is not limited to the interpersonal realm. Scholars writing about cultural competency in the context of archives and libraries have primarily shown interest in how building it affects structures within the profession and practice of libraries and archives. Montiel-Overall et al. argue that cultural competency works at multiple levels simultaneously, noting that its purpose is

to bridge gaps in services to communities by connecting them with outside resources; to recognize socioeconomic and political factors that adversely affect diverse populations; and to effectively implement institutional policies that benefit diverse populations and communities.²¹

Keeping in mind these concepts of introspection, continual growth, and structural components, as articulated by LIS scholars, the authors of the present study derived the following definition of cultural competency for the archives and affiliated professions:

Cultural competency is the capacity to continually improve one's ability to function with self-awareness, open-mindedness, humility, respect, knowledge, and interpersonal skill when engaging people from all backgrounds and experiences. It requires an awareness and understanding of the significance of culture, beginning with one's own, and an orientation of respectful curiosity toward the beliefs, values, and practices of others. Key components are the recognition of the structural, socioeconomic, and political factors that adversely affect diverse populations and the commitment to respond with policies or practices that recognize, affirm, and protect the dignity of individuals, families, and communities.

This definition reflects the profession's characterization of cultural competency as an ongoing process that stems from attributes such as an appreciation of other cultures, a desire to interact with them respectfully, and a willingness to learn about and understand them.

Aligning with cognitive (know), affective (value), and behavioral (do) practices also requires attributes of self-awareness and humility in acknowledging one's own ignorance and need for development. This humility includes forgiveness of (not shame toward) oneself and others when genuine attempts at cross-cultural interactions fail. Those who embrace and exercise the principles of cultural competency continue to develop related abilities as they progress along the cultural competency continuum. Ultimately, organizations and individuals who continually and genuinely practice cultural competency produce results by expanding social capital, which impacts all parts of the archival profession and record. Some of the most meaningful results may be intangible, such as developing trusting, steadfast relationships between individuals and/or organizations of different cultures. Some of these results are more tangible, such as inclusive collection development policies, reparative description efforts, outreach to and collaboration with underrepresented communities, and increases in the diversity of the workforce. This study examines organizational recruitment practices as one potential measurable indicator of an organization's place on the continuum.

Literature Review

During their review of the professional literature, the authors learned of many case studies, initiatives, and surveys promoting the application of cultural competency or its related concepts (e.g., cultural appropriateness or cultural intelligence) toward the goal of increasing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).²² The majority focused on serving, working with, and increasing underrepresented

cultures in the library and archival professions (i.e., Black, Indigenous, and people of color [BIPOC]), unlike the health-care professions, where studies address LBGTQIA+, veterans, or other communities/cultures. The literature expresses the value of cultural competency concepts in different facets of library and archives work—improving metadata practices (critical cataloging and inclusive archival description), increasing the number of students from underrepresented communities in library programs, retaining people of color in the library and archives workforce, strengthening services for and engagement with diverse communities—often offering strategies for those whose backgrounds reflect dominant Western cultures to advance DEIA efforts through increasing their cultural intelligence or competency.²³

An investigation of studies of qualifications in LIS job advertisements revealed a 2011 analysis of the education, training, and recruitment of special collections librarians that specifically omitted archivists from the study, yet a number of duties and qualifications examined related to work in archives.²⁴ The study revealed that specific required qualifications varied, compounded by different words used for knowledge or skill sets representing reference and public service (e.g., “clientele,” “customer,” “reference,” “searching,” “serving,” “user,” “users,” “uses,” “visitors”) distributed between qualifications and duties sections.

In 2020, Warren and Scoulas published a content and comparative analysis of job advertisements, investigating the “lack of diversity among special collections librarians . . . and the expectations placed upon members of underrepresented groups.” The study addressed five questions, one being “Do the job advertisements indicate a diverse spectrum of candidates?”²⁵ Their findings postulate that the extensive requirements and duties listed overwhelm potential candidates. They also explored diversity statements and found that while 66.6 percent of the institutions had a general statement of diverse hiring practices, “most statements on diversity or commitment to diversity are buried within the advertisement or included at the conclusion of the job advertisement.”²⁶

Literature on recruitment and retention of employees from marginalized cultures discusses how the lack of awareness by the white-centered, dominant culture of the library and archives professions impacts people of color (POC) in the workforce.²⁷ Writing in 1999, white librarian John Berry observed, “The idea of ‘culturally competent’ library service is nothing new to librarians from the African American community or the many other ethnic and cultural constituencies in America. . . . Yet true cultural competence has rarely blessed the librarian profession or even penetrated the professional consciousness.”²⁸ Professionals from nondominant cultures, such as Chinese and Latino cultures, write about the challenges of balancing their desires to behave according to their own cultures with the reality that they need to conform to the dominant white culture while at work.²⁹

Despite calls to action such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions’ (IFLA) goal to address multiculturalism, which was issued more than twenty years ago, and calls for efforts to “combat racism among

library workers and management, and promote an enlightened approach to racial matters in the library services,” LIS literature reveals a need for additional progress in this area. Professionals of color (PrOC) and professionals from other under-represented cultures are still targets of microaggressions at work and continue to experience a lack of recognition for their professional and academic efforts by predominantly white tenure, retention, and promotion committees.³⁰ The literature suggests that there is still an unbalanced onus placed on PrOC in homogeneous environments and few avenues for them to genuinely express their experiences or how they impact their decision to leave or remain with an organization.³¹

Although this body of literature suggests that cultural competency is needed in the work environment and addresses its role in employee retention, it touches only lightly on recruitment. The authors found few references to screening employees for cultural competency during the recruitment and hiring process. A notable exception is Amy Tureen’s “Transitioning from Passive to Active Diversity Recruitment Strategies,” in which she discusses the refinement of job ads and qualifications as one of the diversity recruitment strategies employed by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.³² Tureen promoted the inclusion of a new preferred qualification for “competence and sensitivity in working at a university in which students, faculty, and staff are broadly diverse with regard to many facets of identity, including but not limited to gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, and religion.” This qualification rapidly transitioned to be required and in some cases to primacy over the ALA-accredited MLIS requirement.³³ This account of how an institution that employs archivists has made progress in recruiting for cultural competency illustrates that this practice does occur at least among some institutions. However, there is a gap in research for probing the degree to which organizations actively seek candidates who possess cultural competency attributes for archival positions and whether those attributes are expressly valued more in different types of archival positions, by different types of employers, or in different regions of the United States.

Research Methods

Similar to an effort to analyze job advertisements for special collections professionals using the Association of College and Research Libraries/Rare Books and Manuscripts Section guidelines,³⁴ the authors determined that “systematic analyses of job advertisements are crucial in understanding the direction of the profession and for guiding professionals at all levels into positions where they can contribute and thrive.”³⁵

To investigate the prevalence of cultural competency as a requirement for employment in archives and related fields, the authors examined job opportunities posted on ArchivesGig, a job board blog curated by Meredith Lowe. ArchivesGig casts a wide net, interpreting the field of archives to include, in Lowe’s words:

“‘archives’ work in the traditional sense (processing, cataloging, reference), but also in records management, rare books, preservation and conservation, digital projects, digital asset management, photo and film collections, oral history, education and outreach, digital archives and repositories, internships (paid and not), relevant curator positions, and more.”³⁶

The authors downloaded job postings for all jobs listed on the site during three specified time periods between March and September of 2021.³⁷ The only postings excluded from this study were those for jobs located outside the United States and the very few posted by individuals rather than organizational employers. Believing that cultural competency includes acting within one’s sphere of influence to affect structural change and that it can and should be practiced at all levels of an organization, the authors decided to include jobs for interns and others with a relative lack of power within an organization.

To determine how many job postings would need to be included in the study to achieve a high level of confidence in the results, the authors first looked for cultural competency language in a sample of 100 postings. They found that 7% of all positions in this initial sample included cultural competency as a requirement. Based on this initial sample size of 100, the authors were 95% confident that the proportion of posted positions that include a cultural competency requirement is .07 plus or minus 5%, or between 2% and 12%. To achieve a margin of error of less than 3% with 99% confidence, the authors determined it would be necessary to analyze more than 482 postings and downloaded a total of 523. During the analysis process, they eliminated those that were incompletely captured and could no longer be found online to be redownloaded, and they deduplicated data by identifying repostings for the same position. Ultimately, 499 postings were included in the study.

The authors adopted the human coding (rather than machine coding) method of content analysis, each coding an equal number of job postings on several variables. As defined by Kimberly A. Neuendorf, “Human coding involves the use of people as coders, with each using a standard codebook and coding form to read, view, or otherwise decode the target content and record his or her objective and careful observations on pre-established variables.”³⁸ While automated methods can be employed to analyze textual data, the human method was selected for this study based on the authors’ belief that cultural competency is a highly nuanced concept that can be expressed in a variety of ways and cannot be reduced to the presence of particular key words or phrases.

The primary variable analyzed was the occurrence of language within the job postings indicating that the employer requires or prefers the individual holding the position to possess a level of cultural competency to perform its duties. A related but separate variable was the presence of language indicating that the employer requires or prefers the individual holding the position to possess knowledge, skills, or abilities related to diversity, equity, or inclusion (DEI). This was considered a

conceptually broader type of qualification than possessing cultural competency. The final DEI-related variable was whether anywhere in the posting, or directly linked from it, there was a general statement declaring the commitment of the employer to the principles of DEI and/or cultural competency.

Each posting was also coded for additional variables that were analyzed for this study. The geographic region of the employer was coded according to US Census designations for regions and divisions.³⁹ The category of the position was coded as being primarily one of the following: administrative leadership, technical services, collection/asset management, public services/outreach, curatorial, appraisal, records management, research, public history, archival education, or multiple (for solo archivists or other positions that could not be categorized as primarily one category given the wide range of duties represented). The type of employer was coded along the categories of academic, nonprofit, for-profit, federal, state, local, or tribal; it is notable that the percentages for employer type in the job ads sample for this study closely align with data from the A*CENSUS II: All Archivists Survey, conducted in 2021⁴⁰ (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of Employer Type Percentages in A*CENSUS II and the Study's Sample of Job Ads

	A*CENSUS II (No.)	A*CENSUS II (%)	Job Ads (No.)	Job Ads (%)	Difference (%)
Academic	2046	38.19%	208	41.68%	3.50%
Federal	705	13.16%	55	11.02%	-2.14%
State	417	7.78%	33	6.61%	-1.17%
Local	350	6.53%	45	9.02%	2.49%
Tribal	14	0.26%	2	0.40%	0.14%
Nonprofit	1121	20.92%	128	25.65%	4.73%
For-profit	286	5.34%	28	5.61%	0.27%
Community Archives	51	0.95%	N/A		
Self-employed	106	1.98%	N/A		
Other/Don't Know	262	4.89%	N/A		
	5358	100.00%	499	100.00%	

The authors developed a codebook and corresponding spreadsheet to record data for each of the variables. To maximize the reliability of the results, the authors assessed the coding scheme by each coding the same 10 sample postings. The authors achieved an intercoder agreement of 80% on the sample for cultural competency language; the exercise prompted the coders to address any disagreements or discrepancies that emerged, revise the codebook and form accordingly, and clarify instructions for determining the presence of cultural competency requirements. After all

the postings in the sample had been coded, the authors met to review each job posting that any of them had identified as potentially having cultural competency language to ensure consistency on this data point.

The definition of cultural competency offered earlier in this article was used as the starting point in evaluating postings to determine whether they listed cultural competency as a requirement. It was not necessary for the term “cultural competency” to be used in the job posting; the authors looked for language such as “cultural awareness,” “cultural sensitivity,” “demonstrated ability working successfully with diverse cultures,” and “valuing differences.” Recognizing the importance of a shared conceptualization of the framework for cultural competency to consistently identify and code the postings, the authors included additional instructions in the codebook:

- Do not count those listing only the requirement that the applicant has worked in diverse environments or will work in a diverse environment unless it also calls for successful related experience or demonstrated knowledge, skills, and/or specific abilities.
- Do not count language that is limited to requiring the applicant to have the ability to work in a diverse environment or participate in making the environment more diverse.
- Count language requiring cultural competencies, such as demonstrated ability to work successfully with a marginalized group or groups, but do not count a requirement for subject expertise related to a particular culture.

The study did not require every aspect of cultural competency to be reflected in a job posting for it to be coded as containing cultural competency language. Position descriptions are not written to this level of specificity, and cultural competency is deeper and more nuanced than can be fully reflected in a position description. Furthermore, while cultural competency is vital at all levels of an organization, certain aspects of it are not directly relatable to positions at all levels, such as affecting structural change within society as a whole or even within one’s organization. Coding allowed nuances that reflect how each person operates within their own sphere of influence.

Findings

The primary finding of this analysis is that a small percentage of job postings in the study included cultural competency among the required or preferred qualifications for posted archives positions. Of the 499 job postings, only 36 (7%) contained language that related to cultural competency (see Figure 1). This strongly suggests that while cultural competency is recognized and valued by the profession, there is little adoption of it as a qualification one must hold to be employed as an archivist.



FIGURE 1. Percentage of job postings that included cultural competency language

A higher number of job ads (29%) included the presence of language within the position description or qualifications indicating that the employer requires or prefers the individual holding the position to possess some knowledge, skills, or abilities related to diversity, equity, inclusion, or accessibility (see Figure 2). This reflects a higher degree of adoption of the values of DEIA more generally than those of cultural competency specifically. Since all ads with cultural competency language were also coded as having DEIA language, the 29% of ads containing DEIA language included the 7% of those that contained cultural competency language. However, more than three-quarters of ads that included DEIA language did *not* include cultural competency language, reflecting a lack of acceptance of cultural competency as a method to enact DEIA (see Figure 3).

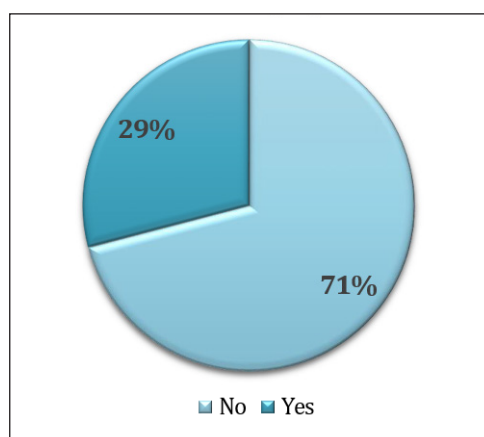


FIGURE 2. Percentage of job postings that included DEIA language

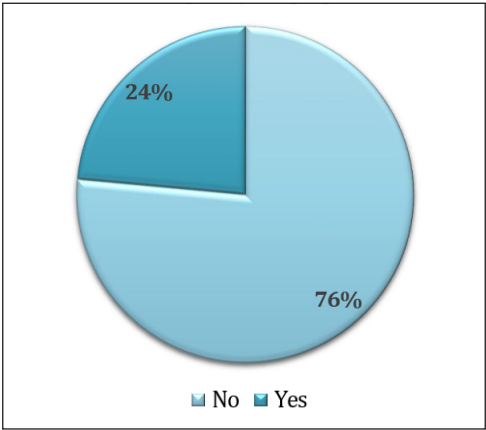


FIGURE 3. Percentage of job postings without cultural competency language that did include DEIA language

The study also examined whether anywhere in the position announcement, or directly linked from the position announcement, there was a statement declaring the commitment of the employer to the principles of DEIA and/or cultural competency. Overall, 41% (205) of job ads included a basic boilerplate statement of affirmative action/equal employment opportunity commission (AA/EEOC), while only 28% (141) of job ads included an enhanced statement that suggested the employer would exceed AA/EEOC compliance. More than 30% (153) of the job postings lacked any type of statement declaring the employer’s commitment to DEIA principles (see Figure 4). A cursory sampling of employers’ online presences revealed that some employers publish DEIA statements on their websites that are not included in the job postings, which could account for the absence of DEIA statements in some of the job ads in this study. Another possible reason for the lack of such statements may

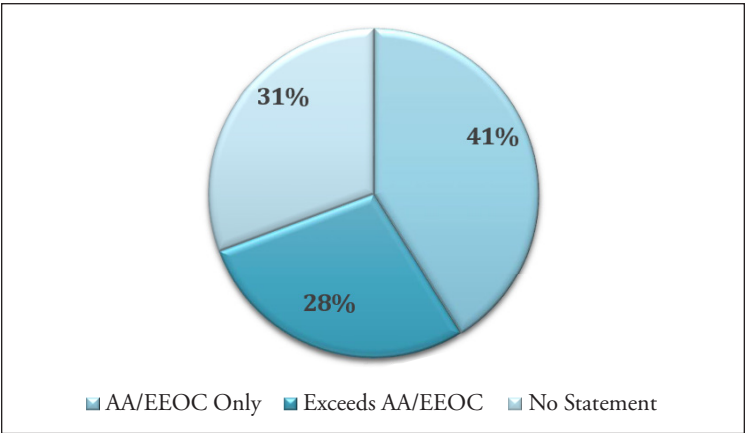


FIGURE 4. Percentage of job postings that included statements that the employer is committed to DEIA principles

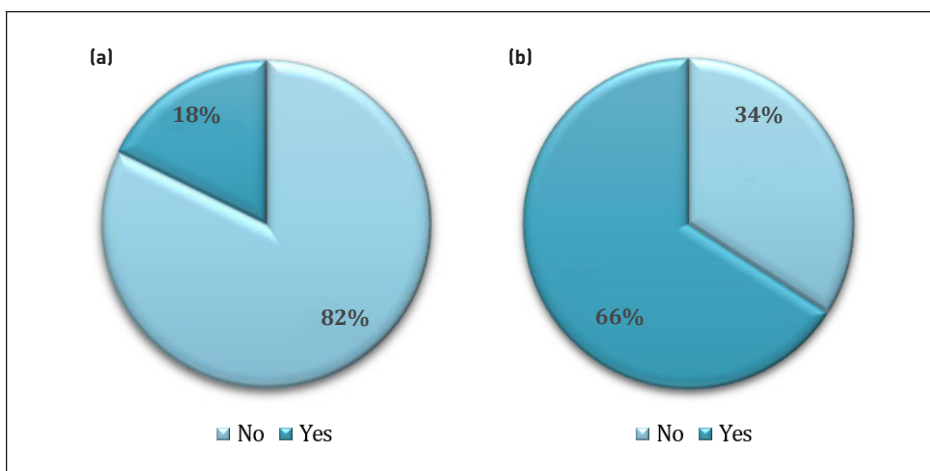


FIGURE 5. Job postings with (a) cultural competency and (b) DEIA language when an employer's DEIA statement of commitment exceeded AA/EOC compliance

be a growing climate of anti-affirmative action sentiment that culminated in the US Supreme Court's decision on June 29, 2023, to end affirmative action in higher education.⁴¹ This might be a topic for more formal research in the future.

The authors hypothesized that the presence of cultural competency and DEIA language within job ads would be more likely when an employer's DEIA statements of commitment exceeded AA/EOC compliance, and the findings confirmed this. In those ads in which the employer's statement exceeded AA/EOC compliance, 18% (25) included cultural competency language and 66% (93) included DEIA language (see Figure 5). This suggests an acceptance of the applicability of cultural competency toward DEIA goals and at least some level of recognition of the relationship between the character of the workforce and an employers' commitment to DEIA principles.

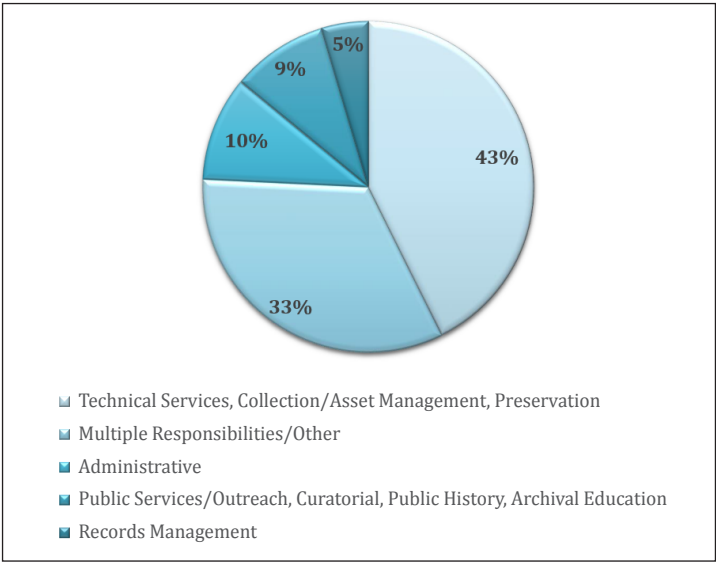


FIGURE 6. Distribution of types of positions within the 499 job postings

In addition to cultural competency and DEIA-related variables, the job ads were coded for the types of functions and duties described for the position (see Figure 6).

Examination of the occurrence of cultural competency language within each group revealed that some types of positions are more highly correlated with cultural competency requirements than others (see Figure 7), and a statistical analysis indicated that these correlations are highly significant.⁴²

The types of positions that most often included a cultural competency requirement were positions that interacted most with the public (i.e., patrons, donors, students): public services/outreach, curatorial, public history, and archival education (17%); and administrative leadership (14%). These findings can be attributed to the limited interpretation and application of cultural competency as a practice only for positions requiring personal interactions with members of the public and users of archives. Only 7% of positions coded as “Multiple” (i.e., positions that have multiple responsibilities) and “Other” required cultural competency, again reflecting its perceived low applicability for positions that are not mainly outward-facing. Technical services, collection/asset management, and preservation positions rarely required cultural competency (5%), and none of the records management positions in the sample required cultural competency. This strongly indicates that employers of archivists do not recognize the value of cultural competency in the workplace nor its applicability to the full range of archival functions.⁴³

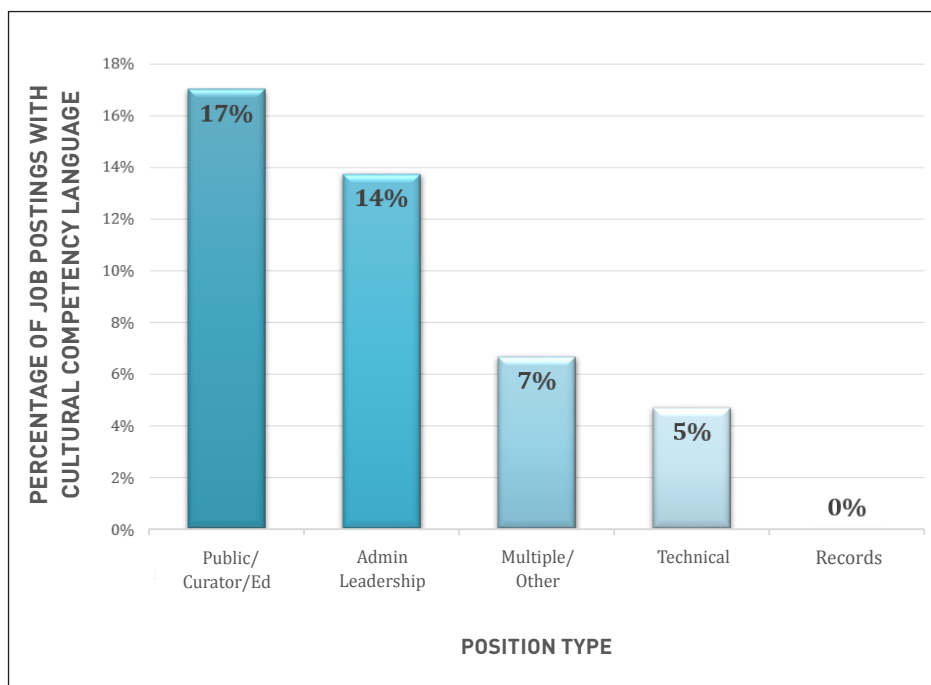


FIGURE 7. Presence of cultural competency language by job position type

The failure of employers to acknowledge the value of cultural competency for positions with responsibilities for description, cataloging, and metadata is notable. There are myriad reparative description and critical cataloging guidelines and initiatives supported by professional associations and prominent hiring institutions.⁴⁴ Although practitioners might not all use the term “cultural competency,” reparative description and critical cataloging embody its principles. They strive to use respectful and inclusive language in their work to increase discovery and access to archival materials with an awareness of how description and access points impact diverse cultures.⁴⁵

Why, then, do such a remarkably low percentage of technical services job postings contain cultural competency language? One possible explanation is that the value of cultural competency in behind-the-scenes work, such as archival processing, metadata/cataloging, and digital asset management (and possibly records management), is less evident than its value in the outward-facing work of positions that have direct contact with patrons, donors, and other users. This reflects a failure to recognize the applicability of cultural competency skills to the work product within the institution and in the profession. This is an area for future research.

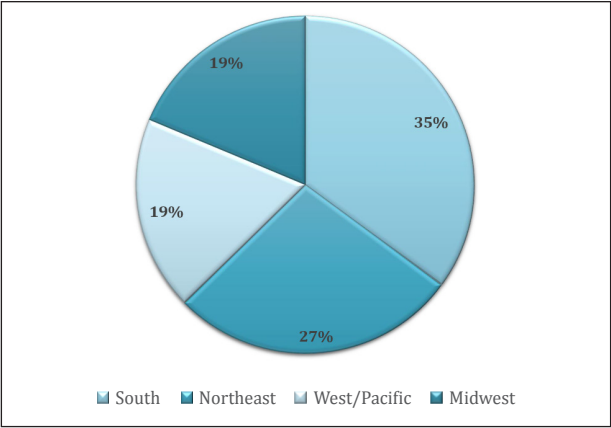


FIGURE 8. Proportion of job postings from each region in the United States in the sample. Note: The total number of position postings is 493 for regional comparisons, rather than 499, due to 6 of the postings lacking a geographic location.

The study also identified the geographic region of each employer in the United States. The highest number of jobs were posted by employers in the South (35%), followed by the Northeast (27%), the West/Pacific (19%), and the Midwest (19%) (see Figure 8).

A statistical analysis of the percentage of positions that included cultural competency language within each region of the United States revealed differences that were moderately significant.⁴⁶ More than 13% of jobs in the West/Pacific region contained cultural competency language, which far exceeds the percentage

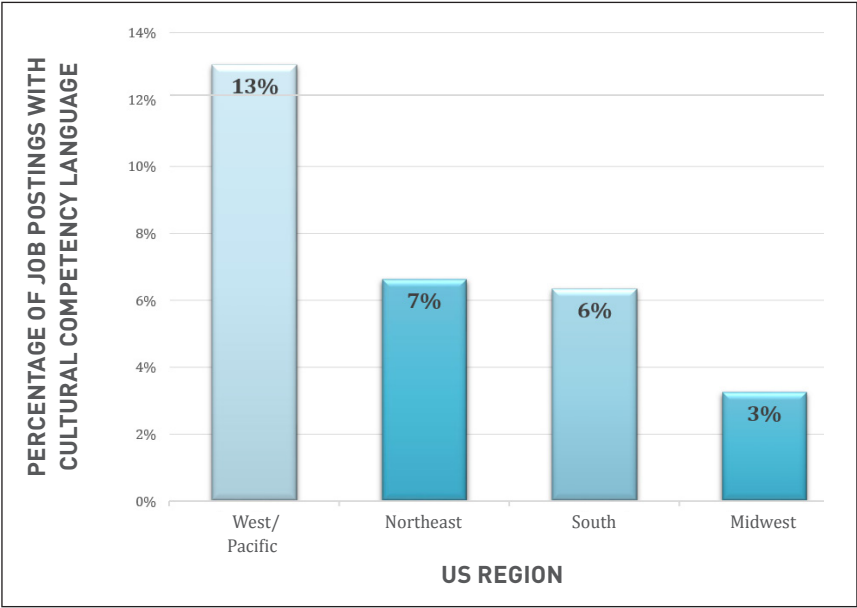


FIGURE 9. Presence of cultural competency language in job descriptions by US region

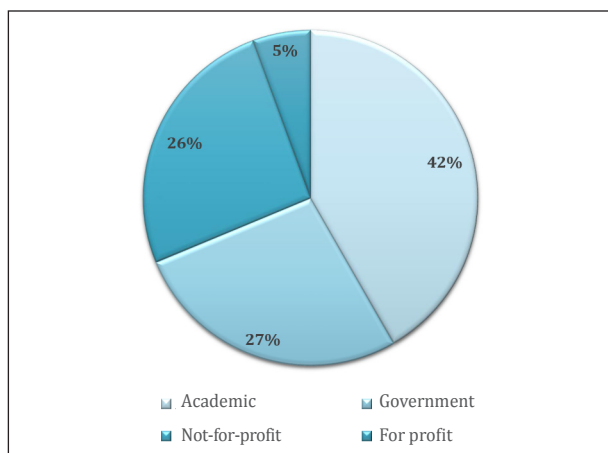


FIGURE 10. Proportion of employer types in the sample

of cultural competency language found in each of the other regions: Northeast (7%), South (6%), and Midwest (3%), as shown in Figure 9. While more research would be needed to explore regional differences, the higher presence of cultural competency language in the West/Pacific and the Northeast could reflect the greater cultural diversity in those regions. Another explanation could be the more progressive politics in those regions. A higher percentage of cultural competency language in job ads appeared in the regions where the majority voted Democratic in the 2020 presidential election.⁴⁷ More recent legislation in some midwestern and southern states to expressly limit DEIA initiatives, including in recruitment and hiring, in state government and public university systems may reflect long-held tendencies that could be evidenced in their 2021 job posting policies.⁴⁸

In addition to looking at the geographic locations of employers, the study also looked at the type of employer—academic, for-profit, government, and nonprofit. More positions in the sample were in academia than in any other employer group (see Figure 10).

Examination of the occurrence of cultural competency language within each employer type revealed a statistically significant difference.⁴⁹ Cultural competency requirements occurred most frequently within the academic group (11%), followed by not-for-profit (8%), government (3%), and for-profit (0%) (see Figure 11). The expected higher percentage in the academic type may be attributed to DEIA initiatives adopted by academia. One reason the percentage of jobs containing cultural competency language might be low in the government sector is due to the time and perseverance needed to make systemic changes to large bureaucratic systems. The authors observed that of the 55 federal job postings in the study, only 5 diverged from the boilerplate recruitment template for US jobs.

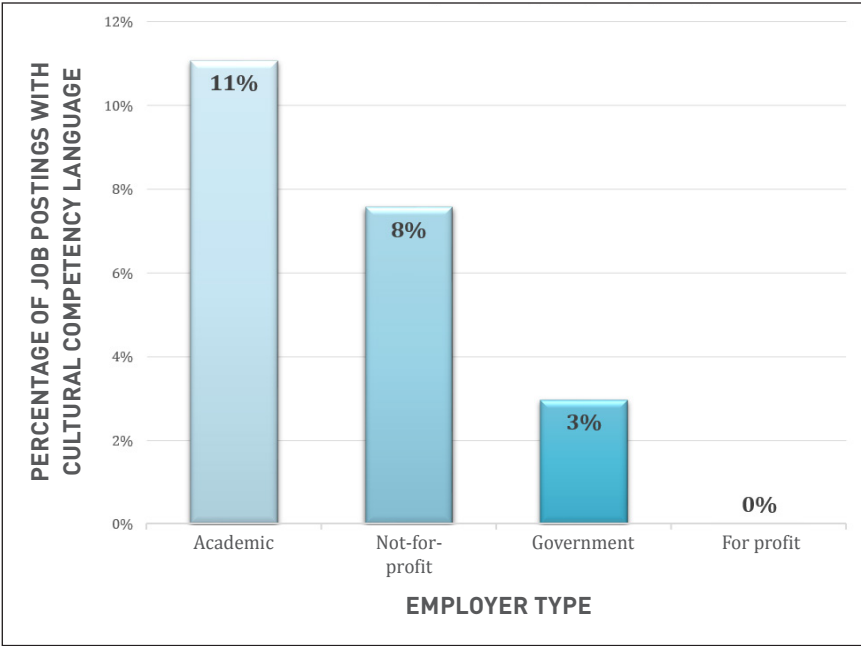


FIGURE 11. Presence of cultural competency language in job postings by employer type

Overall, the findings of the study raise several questions for future research. A nationwide survey would be needed to ascertain why relatively few organizations include cultural competency language in their job descriptions and qualifications. Their reasons might reveal a complex blend of the awareness and empowerment of individuals, organizational culture, and regional politics. It might also be of interest to replicate this study in five to ten years and compare the findings. What changes might we see?

Discussion and Recommendations

The existing body of literature, along with initiatives mentioned earlier, such as the adoption of cultural competency as a new domain by the Academy of Certified Archivists, support the applicability of cultural competency to archival theory and practice. The literature also validates the potential of a cultural competency framework to address the dismal status quo of the workforce—not just the nonrepresentational demographics of the profession but also its Western cultural viewpoint of professional endeavors that emanates from white privilege.⁵⁰ This viewpoint is shared by Fiona Blackburn, who writes: “In a system that privileges some and marginalises others, often on the basis of skin colour but also on the basis of group membership, there are many marginalized groups. Jaeger et al. (2011) argue that working with any marginalised group requires cultural competence.”⁵¹

It makes sense, then, to expect that recruiting efforts for archival positions would reflect this commitment.

Why, then, do only 7 percent of job postings express an expectation that prospective employees demonstrate a willingness and ability to continually develop their cultural competency awareness and skills? Perhaps archives professionals who embrace cultural competency encounter systemic or political barriers when attempting to update recruiting practices, or perhaps human resource processes have not yet caught up with their organizations' values. Bureaucratic structures differ from one work environment to the next, and there can be extreme power differentials in positions at various levels of an organization.

Advocating for cultural competency in recruitment may look different depending on a person's position and the culture of the organization in which they work. Individuals at any level of an organization—whether in administrative leadership, serving on a hiring committee, working in an outward-facing position, or working behind the scenes—can and should act within their sphere of influence to affect change. Cultural competency is not a one-way effort limited to outreach to historically marginalized cultures. It is a framework for all to consider for interacting appropriately in cross-cultural situations.

Hiring bodies in archives can work toward more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces, collections, services, and programs by including cultural competency in their recruiting and hiring efforts to assist in the selection of individuals with awareness (cognitive), attitude (affective), and skills (behavioral) for working with cultures unlike their own. By employing the definition of competence as “possession of sufficient knowledge or skill,” which is an outcome-based state, and competency as attribute-based, the authors propose that both are advantageous in all facets of the archival profession. As discussed earlier, the body of literature on reparative description makes it clear that it is no less important to seek applicants possessing cultural competency awareness and skills in technical services than it is in any other category of position, as this will facilitate the opportunity to enhance multicultural representation of the archival record and services.⁵²

It is notable that SAA's *Work Plan on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility* lists as the first goal “Recruitment and Retention”:

GOAL: Ensure practices support the hiring and retention of a diverse archival workforce. Publish guidance and recommendations for archives and archivists to use at their repositories and places of employment.

WHY: Hiring, supporting, and retaining Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) archives workers is a priority. Equity is a concern, and SAA should contribute to transparency in the recruitment process (including requiring pay scales in job postings) and advocating for a living wage for all archivists.

Community building at the local/organizational level should be addressed, and archives workers should be hired into supportive and inclusive communities where they can thrive at and outside of work.⁵³

People at all levels of an organization can support this community-building goal through inclusive recruiting and hiring practices. Administrators, human resources managers, hiring managers, and other leaders are often in positions to impact recruiting and hiring practices in significant ways. Tureen provides actions for different employee levels to promote diverse hiring practices—those with and without hiring responsibilities and those with administrative authority.⁵⁴ The University of Hawai'i (UH) provides Search Advocate training to process advisors who serve as external search committee members (*not* in their own departments/disciplines) to enhance diversity, validity, and equity in the search and selection process. The volunteer Search Advocates program advances inclusive excellence by identifying and promoting practices that further diversity and social justice while minimizing the impacts of cognitive and structural biases.⁵⁵ Any UH institution can invite or appoint cross-cultural trained staff to serve on search committees to facilitate recruiting others who advocate for cultural competency in recruiting and hiring practices, and to develop inclusive language for recruiting notices/job postings. If those in positions of power are not trained in cultural competency and DEIA, others in the organization can raise their awareness by advocating for the addition of cultural competency language to recruiting notices, rubrics, and interview questions. Effective advocacy will include explaining the critical role these competencies play in the position being recruited for and in the work environment in general.

When developing language for job ads that communicates a desire for applicants with cultural competency values and skills, it is not necessary to expressly use the term “cultural competency.” Examples of cultural competency–related language include “a commitment to continuous personal and professional improvement in intra-cultural relations” and “professionals who enthusiastically embrace the empathy, courage, self-reflection, and respect of a multicultural, diverse, and inclusive workplace, and who strive to incorporate these values into their work and interactions.” The authors recommend including cultural competency skills as part of the required or preferred job qualifications and placing cultural competency skills at the top of the list of job qualifications to emphasize its value to the organization or department. Allowing for variations in the language used to describe the precepts of cultural competency can attract candidates who have these competencies but may not be familiar with the term “cultural competency.”

Listing cultural competencies as qualifications in job postings empowers hiring bodies to integrate competencies into interview questions, candidate evaluation rubrics, or other tools used to screen candidates. When creating evaluation rubrics and/or interview questions, employers can craft them in a way that accommodates

various levels of engagement and demonstration of the stated qualifications. During the interview stage, candidates can be asked questions such as the following:

- Tell us about a time when you witnessed a failure of inclusion or equity, and how did you respond?
 - A candidate can talk about a time when they acted as an ally or when the situation affected them personally.
- Tell us about a time when you adapted your perspective and considered an issue from someone else's point of view.
 - The answer will inform interviewees about the candidate's ability for self-reflection and willingness to adapt.
- Tell us about a time when you witnessed or experienced empathy.
 - This question allows candidates to demonstrate their understanding of empathy and its significance in interpersonal communication.

Evaluating candidates' cultural competency qualifications should focus on their ability to give concrete examples of their commitment or experience rather than merely citing the diverse demographics of the organization or community they have served. When screening candidates, interviewers should consider their interests, knowledge, and experience related to cultural competency. In cover letters and résumés/CVs, hiring institutions should look for

- participation in training/workshops on cultural competency,
- service on DEIA-related committees or task forces,
- participation in projects and initiatives that address issues related to cultural competency, and
- non-job-related experience (such as community volunteer work) or experience from previous nonarchives careers.

Hiring decisions should be informed by how well candidates meet the stated qualifications overall. When considering the value of soft skills (e.g., a demonstrated commitment to cultural competency awareness and an ability to work effectively with people who are dissimilar to themselves) and hard skills (e.g., knowledge of a specific technology or process), the authors recommend that hiring bodies consider the soft skills as outweighing specific technical skills. Many job postings call for a range of skills that will become obsolete (i.e., familiarity with specific tools or platforms). In contrast, interest, skills, or experience in cultural competency will continue to be an asset to the organization.

In addition to recruiting candidates who are engaged in cultural competency efforts, hiring managers should foster a commitment to continuous progress in cultural competency skills among their existing workforce. By making cultural competency and related skills, knowledge, and abilities an expectation for working in the archives and providing support for opportunities to gain this knowledge, employers can attract archivists who have gained these competencies through their activism, volunteer work, previous employment, or other means.

To promote diversity in the workplace, employers must first strive to make the workplace more equitable, inclusive, and accessible. Employees at any level of the organization who are on a journey of cultural competency will be valuable members of diversity and search committees, sharing knowledge and perspectives that open the minds of colleagues and move the organization forward. The authors of this article believe that cultural competency can positively impact recruitment, selection, and retention procedures to bring those from underrepresented cultures and those skilled in intercultural communication into the workforce. By focusing cultural competency awareness and implementation toward these goals, the demographics in the archival workforce may better reflect society and provide opportunities to expand the archival record.

Conclusion

The archival record's diversification and relevance to communities can be enhanced by a multicultural staff and those experienced in successfully working with diverse cultures, characteristics that are woefully scant in the archives profession's job postings. The majority of the archives profession's efforts have been to increase the number of people from underrepresented cultures in the workforce through methods such as supporting students from underrepresented communities, often based on ethnicity, with limited recognition for the role of established administrators and staff in recruiting those with cultural competency skills who demonstrate successful intercultural activities that can be applied to all facets of the profession. Including cultural competency as a qualification in a job description reflects the hiring organization's recognition of the benefits these skills can contribute to in increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in archival environments. Yet the result of this study's content analysis of a sample of job postings provides strong evidence that the profession has included cultural competency skills as requirements for positions in archives only to a very small degree.

Cultural competency is a recognized framework to advance one's ability to function with awareness, knowledge, and interpersonal skills when engaging with people of diverse backgrounds, assumptions, beliefs, values, and behaviors.⁵⁶ Employing cultural competency combines cultural-mindedness with culturally centered communication skills for effective relationships between cultures. Cultural competency is a cornerstone upon which organizations can build diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces, collections, services, and programs. Cultural competency is not merely a method for traditional power holders to communicate with underrepresented cultures but a methodology for all cultures to effectively communicate with those unlike their own. Cultural competency is not limited to the interpersonal realm—it also involves acting within one's sphere of influence to affect structural change in the workplace. It can and should be practiced at all levels of the organization.

The literature and the endeavors of professional organizations recognize the benefits of cultural competency and its role in increasing DEIA in the predominantly homogenous LIS and archival professions. The authors of the present study argue that cultural competency skills are just as critical in technical services as they are in public services, considering the growing importance of reparative description and related archival functions. By articulating the desire for a culturally competent workforce and hiring individuals with these skills, organizations acknowledge that such a workforce contributes to the goals of DEIA.

Consider the impact of prioritizing the recruitment of archivists who are committed to effectively communicating with coworkers, record creators, patrons, donors, and the general community of diverse cultures, armed with knowledge and an openness to shift from their own culture and worldview. Doing so can increase institutional knowledge of records and the people who create and interact with them, thus impacting all aspects of the archival enterprise.

NOTES

- ¹ Kenneth Foote, "To Remember and Forget: Archives, Memory, and Culture," *American Archivist* 53, no. 3 (1990): 378–92, <https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.53.3.d87u013444j3g6r2>.
- ² "Additional Matter (Contributors, Postings, Council Minutes, etc.)," *American Archivist* 73, no. 1 (2010): 316–18, <https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.73.1.82t7272n4664n725>.
- ³ Mikel Hogan-Garcia, *The Four Skills of Cultural Diversity Competence: A Process for Understanding and Practice* (Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1999).
- ⁴ Ellen Engseth, "Cultural Competency: A Framework for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Archival Profession in the United States," *American Archivist* 81, no. 2 (2018): 460–82, <https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081-81.2.460>.
- ⁵ "Cultural Diversity Competency" (course catalog, Society of American Archivists), <https://www2.archivists.org/prof-education/course-catalog/cultural-diversity-competency>, captured at <https://perma.cc/5SEV-YHR4>.
- ⁶ Cheryl Oestreicher, "New for 2023 Examination: Domain 8, Cultural Competency," Academy of Certified Archivists, <https://www.certifiedarchivists.org/node/751>, captured at <https://perma.cc/7P56-8KU3>.
- ⁷ "BACKER: Building Archival Capacity for Keeping Electronic Records," Council of State Archivists, <https://www.statearchivists.org/electronic-records/state-electronic-records-initiative/backer>, captured at <https://perma.cc/6B5K-QBD4>.
- ⁸ In 2022, the Association of College and Research Libraries' Board of Directors approved the joint American Library Association/Association of Research Libraries' "Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity: A Framework," which calls on libraries to "have a clear and realistic plan to evaluate cultural competencies within their organizations and must demonstrate openness to critically look inward and make the necessary changes." The framework refers to the related concepts of cultural humility and cultural fluidity and asserts that cultural competency is limited as a construct but acknowledges its ubiquity and utility. "ALA/ARL Approve Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity: A Framework," American Library Association, August 22, 2022, <https://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2022/08/alaarl-approve-cultural-proficiencies-racial-equity-framework>, captured at <https://perma.cc/2QJK-JNXB>.
- ⁹ Joseph S. Gallegos, "The Ethnic Competence Model for Social Work Education" in Barbara W. White, *Color in a White Society: Selected Papers from the NASW Conference—Color in a White Society*, Los Angeles, California, June 1982 (National Association of Social Workers, 1984), 1–9; Ella Greene-Moton and Meredith Minkler, "Cultural Competence or Cultural Humility? Moving Beyond the Debate," *Health Promotion Practice* 21, no. 1 (2020): 142–45, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839919884912>; L.

- DeSantis, "Cultural Competence: Nursing Faces Imperative Challenge" *Florida Nurse* 38, no. 2 (1990): 1–19; Neal Palafox and Anne Warren, *Cross-Cultural Caring: A Handbook for Health Care Professionals in Hawaii*, 2nd ed. (Honolulu: Transcultural Health Care Forum, John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii, 1985); Joseph G. Ponterotto and J. Manuel Casas, "In Search of Multicultural Competence within Counselor Education Programs," *Journal of Counseling and Development* 65, no. 8 (1987): 430–34; and Brent D. Ruben, "The Study of Cross-Cultural Competence: Traditions and Contemporary Issues," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 13, no. 3 (1989): 229–40.
- ¹⁰ Tori DeAngelis, "In Search of Cultural Competence," *Monitor on Psychology* 46, no. 3 (2015): 64, <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2015/03/cultural-competence>, captured at <https://perma.cc/FHR5-FSP3>.
 - ¹¹ "Cultural Competence in Health and Human Services," National Prevention Information Network, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, September 10, 2021, <https://npi.n.cdc.gov/pages/cultural-competence>, captured at <https://perma.cc/A5GY-KTS7>. This definition was adapted from Terry L. Cross, Marva P. Benjamin, and Mareasa R. Isaacs, *Towards a Culturally Competent System of Care* (Washington, DC: CASSP Technical Assistance Center, Georgetown University Child Development Center, 1989), 13–18.
 - ¹² Lori S. Mestre, "Librarians Working with Diverse Populations: What Impact Does Cultural Competency Training Have on Their Efforts?," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 36, no. 6 (2010): 480, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2010.08.003>.
 - ¹³ American Library Association, *Policy Manual*, <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/section2/3diversity>, captured at <https://perma.cc/7E7M-PK3D>.
 - ¹⁴ National Association of Social Workers, *Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*, <https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/NASW-Practice-Standards-Guidelines/Standards-and-Indicators-for-Cultural-Competence-in-Social-Work-Practice>, captured at <https://perma.cc/RMK8-W3BV>. An earlier version of this definition was referenced by the Association of College and Research Libraries, *Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries* (2012), <https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/diversity>, captured at <https://perma.cc/4ZKP-SDNL>.
 - ¹⁵ Patricia Montiel-Overall, Annabelle Villaescusa Nuñez, and Verónica Reyes-Escudero, *Latinos in Libraries, Museums, and Archives: Cultural Competence in Action! An Asset-Based Approach* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 23.
 - ¹⁶ Engseth, "Cultural Competency," 461.
 - ¹⁷ Dennis Meissner, "Bare Necessities," *American Archivist* 80, no. 1 (2017): 9, <https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.80.1.6>.
 - ¹⁸ Dominique Luster, "Culturally Conscious, Racially Competent Metadata" (conference presentation, Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting [online], July 26, 2021).
 - ¹⁹ Nathan Sentance, "Works in Progress Webinar: Ngangaanha (to Care for)—Improving Cultural Safety at the University of Sydney Library," webinar, November 16, 2021, <https://www.oclc.org/research/events/2021/111621-improving-cultural-safety-university-sydney-library.html>.
 - ²⁰ Kelvin L. White, "Meztizaje and Remembering in Afro-Mexican Communities of the Costa Chica: Implications for Archival Education in Mexico," *Archival Science* 9, nos. 1–2 (2009): 52, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-009-9102-5>.
 - ²¹ Montiel-Overall, Nuñez, and Reyes-Escudero, *Latinos in Libraries, Museums, and Archives*, 23.
 - ²² Soon Ang, Linn Van Dyne, Christine Koh, K. Y. Ng, Klaus J. Templer, Cheryl Tay, and N. A. Chandrasekar, "Cultural Intelligence: Its Measurement and Effects on Cultural Judgment and Decision Making, Cultural Adaptation and Task Performance," *Management & Organization Review* 3, no. 3 (2007): 335–71, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-8784.2007.00082.x>.
 - ²³ There are numerous efforts toward reparative description and related practices such as critical cataloging, inclusive description, ethical description, conscientious description, and anti-oppressive description. Several examples can be found in Treshani Perera, "Description Specialists and Inclusive Work and/or Initiatives—An Exploratory Study," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 20, no. 5 (2022): 355–86, <https://doi.org/10.3998/ticker.1943>; and Jessica Tai, "Cultural Humility as a Framework for Anti-Oppressive Archival Description," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.24242/jclis.v3i2.120>. Scholarship addressing recruitment and retention of people of color includes Kimberly Black, "Recruiting Under-Represented Groups to Librarianship," *Multicultural Learning and Teaching* 13, no. 1 (2018): <https://doi.org/10.1515/mlt-2017-0004>; Lian Ruan and

- Weiling Liu, "The Role of Chinese American Librarians in Library and Information Science Diversity," *International Journal of Librarianship* 2, no. 2 (2017): 18–36, <https://doi.org/10.23974/ijol.2017.vol2.2.39>; and Salvador Guereña and Edward Erazo, "Latinos and Librarianship," *Library Trends* 49, no. 1 (2000): 138. For perspectives on strengthening services for and engagement with diverse communities, see Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Ng, Templer, Tay, Chandrasekar, "Cultural Intelligence"; and Krista McCracken, "Challenging Colonial Spaces: Reconciliation and Decolonizing Work in Canadian Archives," *Canadian Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (2019): 182–201.
- ²⁴ K. Hansen, "Education, Training, and Recruitment of Special Collections Librarians: An Analysis of Job Advertisements," *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 12, no. 2 (2011): 110–32.
- ²⁵ K. E. Warren and J. M. Scoulas, "A Content and Comparative Analysis of Job Advertisements for Special Collections Professionals Using ACRL RBMS Guidelines," *Journal of Library Administration* 60, no. 6 (2020): 616, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2020.1748435>.
- ²⁶ Warren and Scoulas, "A Content and Comparative Analysis of Job Advertisements," 622.
- ²⁷ Shaundra Walker, "Critical Race Theory and Recruitment, Retention, and Promotion of a Librarian of Color: A Counter-Story," in *Where Are All the Librarians of Color? The Experiences of People of Color in Academia*, ed. Rebecca Hankins and Miguel Juárez (Sacramento: Library Juice Press, 2015), 135–60; Isabel Espinal, Tonia Sutherland, and Charlotte Roh, "A Holistic Approach for Inclusive Librarianship: Decentering Whiteness in Our Profession," *Library Trends* 67, no. 1 (2018): 147–62, <https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2018.0030>.
- ²⁸ Berry is quoted in Guereña and Erazo, "Latinos and Librarianship," 138.
- ²⁹ Guereña and Erazo, "Latinos and Librarianship," 138; Ruan and Liu, "The Role of Chinese American Librarians in Library and Information Science Diversity."
- ³⁰ Miriam E. Sweeney and Nicole A. Cooke, "You're So Sensitive! How LIS Professionals Define and Discuss Microaggressions Online," *Library Quarterly* 88, no. 4 (2018): 375–90, <https://doi.org/10.1086/699270>; Maxine Jacobson, "Breaking Silence, Building Solutions: The Role of Social Justice Group Work in the Retention of Faculty of Color," *Social Work with Groups* 35, no. 3 (2012): 267–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2011.642265>.
- ³¹ Espinal, Sutherland, and Roh, "A Holistic Approach for Inclusive Librarianship"; Jacobson, "Breaking Silence, Building Solutions."
- ³² Amy Tureen, "Transitioning from Passive to Active Diversity Recruitment Strategies" in *Implementing Excellence in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: A Handbook for Academic Libraries*, ed. Corliss Lee, Brian Lym, and Tatiana Bryant (Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2022), 11–28.
- ³³ Tureen, "Transitioning from Passive to Active Diversity Recruitment Strategies," 13–14.
- ³⁴ "Guidelines: Competencies for Special Collections Professionals," American Library Association, July 8, 2008, <https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/comp4speccollect>, captured at <https://perma.cc/7NZ9-BQBH>.
- ³⁵ Warren and Scoulas, "A Content and Comparative Analysis of Job Advertisements," 613–30.
- ³⁶ Meredith Lowe, "About," *Archives Gig* (blog), <https://archivesgig.com/about-2/>, captured at <https://perma.cc/2ARJ-EHPG>. Lowe works at the University of Wisconsin–Madison iSchool in the office of Continuing Education Services.
- ³⁷ The time periods were March 17–25, 2021; April 12–22, 2021; and July 1–September 30, 2021.
- ³⁸ Kimberly A. Neuendorf, *The Content Analysis Guidebook* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002), 52.
- ³⁹ United States Census Bureau, "Geographic Levels," https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census/guidance-geographies/levels.html#par_textimage_34, captured at <https://perma.cc/4L9D-4K3D>.
- ⁴⁰ Makala Skinner and Ioana Hulbert, *A*CENSUS II: All Archivists Survey Report* (Ithaca S+R and Society of American Archivists, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.317224>. A chi-square goodness-of-fit test resulted in a *p*-value of 0.3235, which indicates that the proportions of employer types in the sample follow the same distribution as those from A*CENSUS II.
- ⁴¹ Mark Sherman, "Supreme Court Live Updates: Court Ends Affirmative Action in Colleges," *Associated Press*, June 29, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/supreme-court-affirmative-action-college-race-f83d6318017ec9b9029b12ee2256c744>, page unavailable.

- ⁴² A chi-square test resulted in the highly significant p -value of less than .01, strongly suggesting that cultural competency language and job position are not independent.
- ⁴³ A preservation specialist stymied by the wishes of cultural groups who would not abide by her exhibit requirements approached one of the authors on methods to handle the situation.
- ⁴⁴ Examples of professional initiatives include the American Library Association's "Cataloging Code of Ethics" (<https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/16716>) and "Core Competencies for Cataloging and Metadata Professional Librarians" (<https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/7853>), which address diversity and bias in descriptive practice, and Society of American Archivists Descriptive Section's "Inclusive Description Resources" (<https://www2.archivists.org/groups/description-section/inclusive-description>, captured at <https://perma.cc/RF7X-8MSM>). Examples of hiring institution's efforts include Harvard University's "Guidelines for Inclusive and Conscientious Description" (<https://wiki.harvard.edu/confluence/display/hmschommanual/Guidelines+for+Inclusive+and+Conscientious+Description>, captured at <https://perma.cc/6QFC-S5EQ>); Appalachian State University's "Metadata for Describing Digital Objects: Inclusive Metadata" (<https://guides.library.appstate.edu/c.php?g=1197149&p=8756270>, captured at <https://perma.cc/QR3R-QE68>); University of California, Los Angeles's "Toward Ethical and Inclusive Descriptive Practices in Library Special Collections" (<https://www.library.ucla.edu/about/policies/toward-ethical-and-inclusive-descriptive-practices-in-ucla-library-special-collections/>, link not found); Online Archive of California's "Inclusive Practices for Access and Description" (<https://help.oac.cdlib.org/support/solutions/articles/9000198722-shared-readings-resources-and-considerations-inclusive-practices-for-access-and-description>); New York University Libraries' "Archival Collections Management, Inclusive and Reparative Work" (<https://guides.nyu.edu/archival-collections-management/inclusive>, captured at <https://perma.cc/6X4G-RTEB>); University of Washington's "Critical Cataloging and Archival Description" (<https://www.lib.washington.edu/about/edi/critical-cataloging-and-archival-description>, captured at <https://perma.cc/7SAP-Y78H>); and many more.
- ⁴⁵ Shavonn-Haevyn Matsuda, "Decolonizing Knowledge Organization Systems: Hawaiian Epistemology, Representation and Organization," *Advances in Classification Research Online* 28, no. 1 (2019), <http://dx.doi.org/10.7152/acro.v28i1.15391>.
- ⁴⁶ The chi-square test for independence resulted in a p -value of .0665, indicating a moderately significant difference between US regions in the portion of ads that contain cultural competency language.
- ⁴⁷ In the 2020 US presidential election, all 9 of the northeastern states voted Democratic, 7 of 13 of the western states voted Democratic, 12 out of 17 southern states voted Republican, and 8 of 12 midwestern states voted Republican.
- ⁴⁸ David A. Lieb, "GOP States Targeting Diversity, Equity Efforts in Higher Ed," *Associated Press*, April 17, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/diversity-equity-inclusion-legislation-7bd8d4d52aa9a9902dde59a257874686>. The majority of states discussed in the article are either in the Midwest or the South: Kansas, Texas, Florida, Iowa, West Virginia, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. Two states in the West are also named: Arizona and Utah.
- ⁴⁹ The chi-square test for independence results in a p -value of .0153, indicating a highly significant difference among employer types in the portion of ads that contain cultural competency language.
- ⁵⁰ Michelle Gallinger, Helen Wong Smith, and Anne Ackerson, *Relevant, Respectful, and Responsive: Government Archives in the 21st Century – An Overview of Cultural Competency in State and Territorial Archives in 2022* (Boston: Council of State Archivists, 2022), <https://www.statearchivists.org/viewdocument/relevant-respectful-and-responsiv>.
- ⁵¹ Fiona Blackburn, "The Intersection between Cultural Competence and Whiteness in Libraries," *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*, December 1, 2015, <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2015/culturalcompetence/>, captured at <https://perma.cc/CBY9-AZCE>. Blackburn refers to P. T. Jaeger, M. M. Subramaniam, C. B. Jones, and J. C. Bertot, "Diversity and LIS Education: Inclusion and the Age of Information," *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 52, no. 3, (2011): 166–83.
- ⁵² Meaghan Alston, "Reparative Description: The Importance of Words," *Advocating for Ourselves: Working in Underrepresented and Multicultural Archives and Libraries* (2022), <https://chfellows.pubpub.org/pub/zk701do1/release/1>, captured at <https://perma.cc/9LBS-MKYK>; Margaret C. Joyce and Keahiahi S. Long, "Controlled Vocabulary as Communication: The Process of Negotiating Meaning in an Indigenous Knowledge Organization System," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 60, nos. 6–7 (2022): 583–98, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2022.2090041>; Alia Kempton, "A Case Study:

Reparative Description in Archival Settings” (master’s thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.17615/5518-7064>; Rachel L. Frick and Merrilee Proffitt, *Reimagine Descriptive Workflows: A Community-informed Agenda for Reparative and Inclusive Descriptive Practice* (Dublin, OH: OCLC Research, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.25333/wd4b-bs51>.

- ⁵³ Society of American Archivists, *Work Plan on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility*, November 10, 2021, https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/SAA-DEIA-WorkPlan_AsApproved111021.pdf, captured at <https://perma.cc/S8YX-GQ6Q>.
- ⁵⁴ Tureen, “Transitioning from Passive to Active Diversity Recruitment Strategies,” 23.
- ⁵⁵ Aron Nelson, “Search Advocates,” Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Excellence, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/ovpae/academic-personnel/search-advocates/>, captured at <https://perma.cc/5PEB-6MK8>.
- ⁵⁶ Hogan-Garcia, *The Four Skills of Cultural Diversity Competence*.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Helen Wong Smith is the archivist for University Records at the University of Hawai’i (UH) at Mānoa, where she earned her MLIS. Previous positions include Hawaiian Collection librarian at UH Hilo and lead archivist for the Pacific Island Network of the National Park Service. She has been sharing how cultural competency can advance the archival profession since 2015 and is currently developing questions for this new domain for the Academy of Certified Archivists. She was named a Fellow of SAA in 2016. She is an alumna of the Archives Leadership Institute.



Dawn Schmitz is the curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts at Atkins Library, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where she has worked since 2012 in various roles, including as associate dean for Special Collections and University Archives. Previously, she worked at the University of California Irvine and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She holds a PhD in communications (media history/cultural studies) and an MLIS specializing in archives and records management, both from the University of Pittsburgh. She is an alumna of the Archives Leadership Institute.



Cyndi Shein is the Nevada state archivist and deputy administrator for the Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records. She previously held positions at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Libraries Special Collections and Archives; J. Paul Getty Trust Institutional Archives; University of California (UC) Irvine Libraries Special Collections and Archives; UC Santa Barbara Libraries; and the National Baseball Hall of Fame Museum, Library and Archives. She holds an MLIS from San José State University. She served on the SAA Publications Board and is a peer reviewer for various journals. She is an alumna of the Archives Leadership Institute.



Lisa Schmitz is a professor at Saint Paul College in Saint Paul, Minnesota, where she has taught math, psychology, and statistics for psychology since 1999. She has a master of science in statistics from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and a master of arts in counseling psychology from the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul. She is certified in distance learning and has been involved in developing and teaching online courses since 2003. She has served as a statistician for several published studies, assisting researchers from various fields of study in drawing conclusions from data.