



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement in support of LGBTQ+ people in libraries

WESTFORD, Massachusetts – The Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) unequivocally supports the LGBTQ+ community’s rights to full and equitable inclusion in libraries, both as patrons and employees, and to representation within the collections we steward.

Across North America, library collections and programming have been a major target of discriminatory, anti-LGBTQ+ legislative efforts. Protests by hate groups and individuals have disrupted library events and threatened libraries’ abilities to provide an inclusive space for LGBTQ+ people.

Efforts to ban library materials reached record highs in 2022, according to the American Library Association’s annual book censorship report. Over half of the titles on its “[Most Challenged Books](#)” list featured LGBTQ+ themes. In the United States, Canada, and beyond, events such as drag story hours at public libraries have faced homophobic and transphobic attacks, often led by extremist groups. Some of the proposed anti-LGBTQ+ bills aimed at libraries threaten library workers with job loss or even jail time for refusing to comply or remove challenged library materials. These legislative attacks and protests threaten both the physical safety and information privacy of LGBTQ+ patrons and staff at libraries and affiliated institutions. Furthermore, removing LGBTQ+ materials from libraries compromises patrons’ ability to access key information about their identities, legal rights, and health care needs. Within and beyond libraries, many of these measures have particularly threatened the safety and legal rights of transgender people.

Art libraries, museums, and archives are important sites for diverse communities to cultivate identity and expression; many of our institutions play an indispensable role in preserving the cultural memory of LGBTQ+ communities.

The library profession is centered around equitable access to information and intellectual freedom. These attacks on LGBTQ+ communities are also attacks on the library profession.



ARLIS/NA's mission is to define and champion the arts information profession. Our support of LGBTQ+ communities' inclusion in libraries aligns with our mission and our values.

About the Art Libraries Society of North America

Founded in 1972, the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) is a dynamic, international organization of close to 1,000 individuals devoted to fostering excellence in art and design librarianship and image management in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The membership includes architecture and art librarians, visual resources professionals, artists, curators, educators, publishers, students, and others interested in visual arts information. To serve this diverse constituency, the Society provides a wide range of programs and services within an organizational structure that encourages participation at every level.

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