



## Inclusive Spaces: Artwork created Sahra Dahir

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In response to a year of isolation and online studies, the 2020-21 Library Champions initiative invited students to curate inclusive library spaces. Library champion Sahra Dahir curated a digital sub-tropical aquarium that will be featured on the library information totem displayed at the reception of the library. Sahra has always been fascinated by the aquatic and marine life and makes a poetic and pertinent parallel between fishes and students.



“ I took part in the Library Champion’s project because I have a great passion for art, history and culture. Expressing everyone’s culture through art is an amazing opportunity and I am thrilled to have taken part. The aim of my art was to improve the student learning experience by reducing stress and increasing the students’ knowledge of world history. My art will lighten up the currently dull library and make it a more appealing place to be, as students spend hours in libraries. I have always enjoyed library spaces and visiting different libraries, comparing their set-ups. I pay attention to the furniture as well as the atmosphere of the space because this is what entices people to stay in a space. I consider the library to be an important part of a student’s experience as this is where they spend most of their time. Therefore, to be a part of a project, where I was able to meet new people and see different perspectives on how to improve our library experiences as well as others, has been an amazing opportunity.

### *Overview of artwork*

When I read about the inclusive spaces project, I felt inspired by the word inclusive. We live in a very diverse society, and I believe all spaces should be inclusive, hence I had to decide on a project that is inclusive, calming and increases knowledge. This is why a digital aquarium crossed my mind, I wanted to insert different exotic fish digitally from different areas of the world while hearing the gentle sounds of the water flowing. I have always been fascinated by the aquatic and ocean marine life, particularly sub-tropical aquariums. I have spent a lot of time looking at the movement of different species and how they interact with each other. I found the water element soothing and since eighty percent of the ocean is unexplored, I found it quite intriguing. It can be said that there is a parallel between fish in a tropical aquarium and students in a library space as both species need to navigate through life and knowledge in complete immersion and must coexist in diversity. I hope my project benefits the students that want to use the library space by fulfilling its aims to be inclusive and calming.