



# WHERE DO WE BELONG?

Student thoughts about the Library as a Safe Space

# ABOUT US

KRISTIN COLE

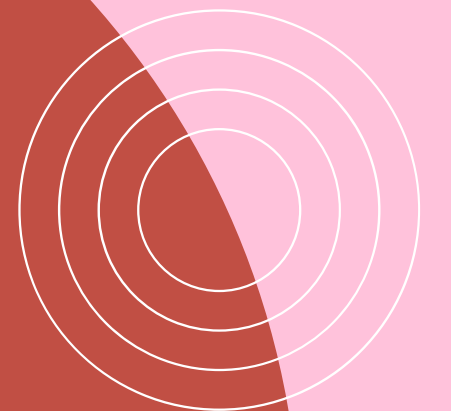
Assessment & Special Projects Librarian  
Otterbein University

JESS CROSSFIELD MCINTOSH

Public Services Librarian  
Otterbein University

MEGAN POWELL

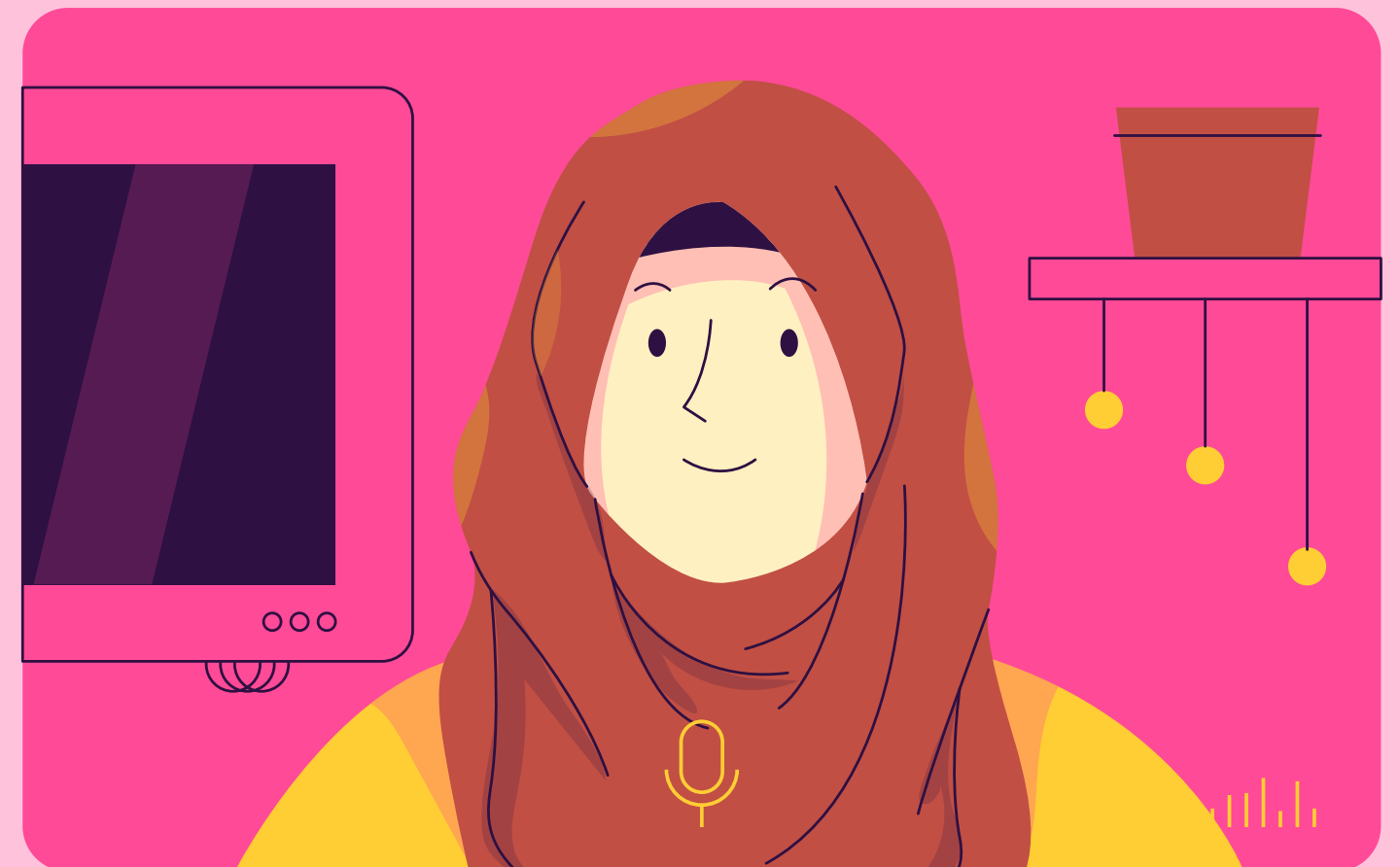
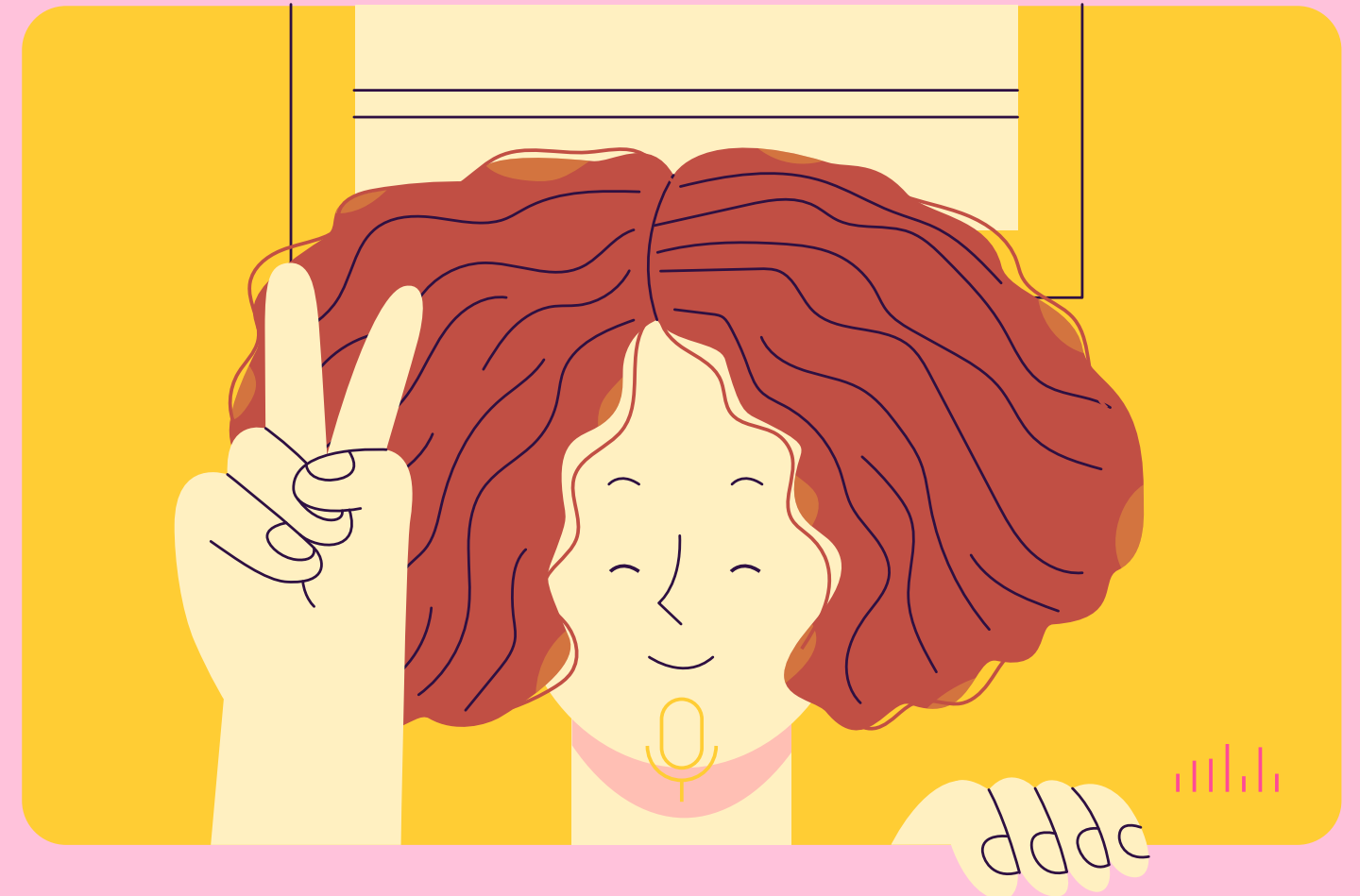
Access Services Manager  
Franklin University



# SO WHY SAFE SPACE?

- 1 Growing diverse student body and reaction to events on campus
- 2 Wanted to know more about their needs & wants

*Are we doing what speaks to them?*



# EARLY STEPS

- ➡ IRB approval
- ➡ Funding from ALAO to support focus group
- ➡ Initial survey to inquire about interested students for focus groups
- ➡ Food and Incentives for participation





# PARTNERS & SUPPORT

OhioLINK Diversity Initiative intern

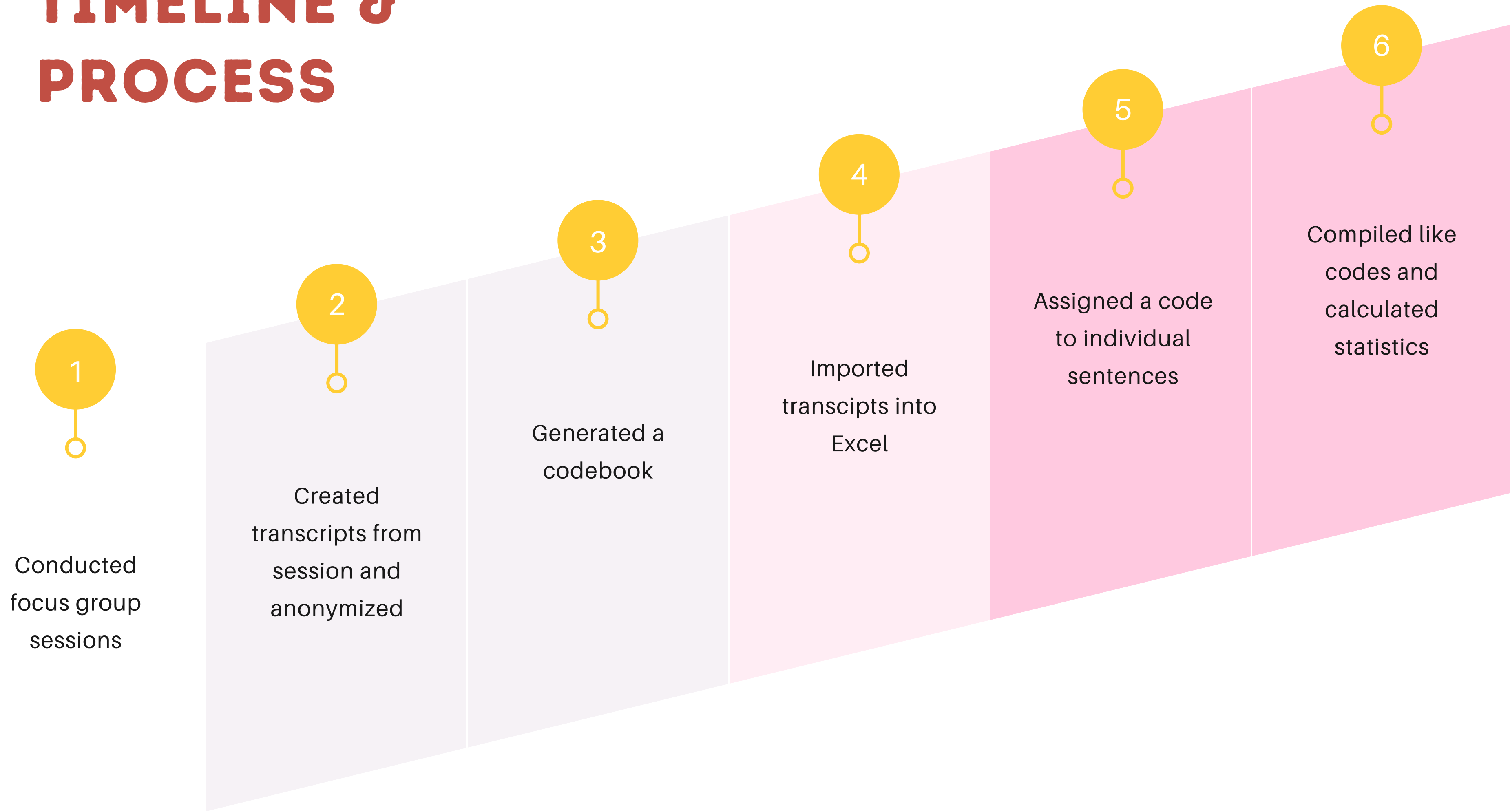
Office of Social Justice & Activism

International Student Support

Freezone (LGBTQIA+ group)

Diverse student groups and faculty  
to gather participants

# TIMELINE & PROCESS



# RESULTS

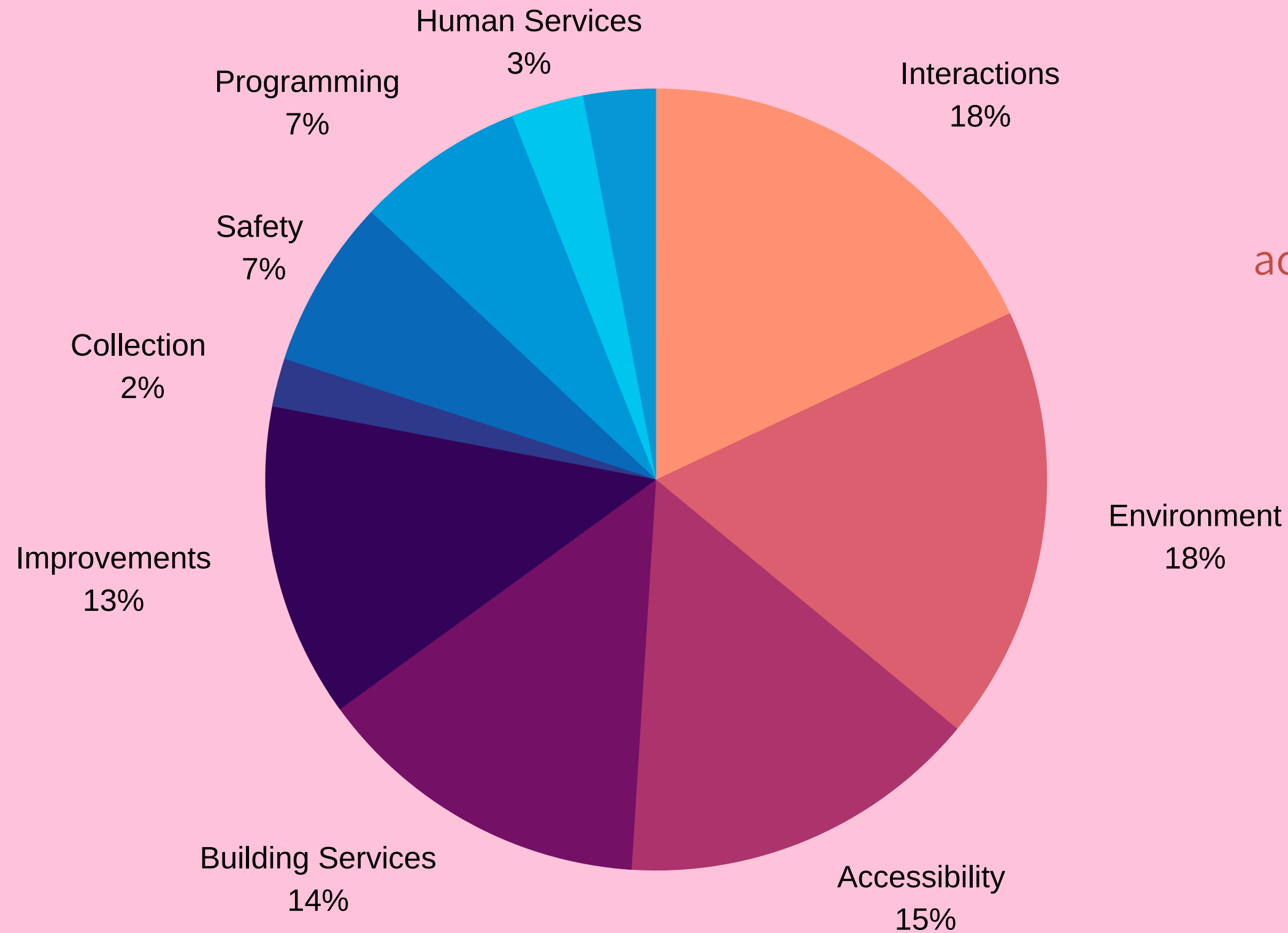
Major takeaways from these conversations varied across the board from comments about experiences, staff conversations, and materials & displays.

Implementation of new spaces ←

Continuation of Social Justice centered displays ←

Updated service policies ←

Greater focus on designated library areas ←



# YOU CAN DO THIS TOO

Easily customize the topics/questions that your specific institution wants to address

Possible even in this COVID-19 environment with applications like Zoom







# STUDENT THOUGHTS

"I remember one time there was a display about like DACA and all that and like me being an undocumented student, it just made me so happy. I was just like, so blown away that y'all took the time to do that. Um, especially since we're such a small population on campus so, I think that's great."

"I don't know who's in charge of like the Ask a Question online, but that is the best thing in the whole, wide world. It's literally the best thing in the whole, wide world."

"I also like browsing the, the stacks to see like what type of books are available cause it helps, it kind of helps give a sense of what the library's values are. Like, if they have books and displays from, diverse authors and things, then that helps make it feel like oh, um, like different identities are being, you know, put in the spotlight in this space."



**THANK YOU!**