

## Proposal for Workshop for iConference 2018

**Workshop Title:** Creating and Cultivating a Scholarly Identity within Digital Worlds

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### Abstract:

Increasing and measuring scholarly impact represents a growing concern for scholars, who must navigate emerging, data-driven methods for communicating their influence. Relevant to academics at all levels, this workshop focuses on scholarly identity, which includes endeavors by scholars to build and promote their reputation, network, and research. Facilitators, who are scholars from three disciplines at various stages of their careers, will explore this topic from different perspectives via a discussion and breakout sessions. Additionally, facilitators will present preliminary findings of an exploratory study concerning how researchers use online platforms, such as academic social networking sites (SNS), to create and cultivate scholarly impact. Workshop outcomes include: identifying scholars' needs in establishing and furthering scholarly identities, exploring optimal use of online platforms to achieve professional goals, providing hands-on practice with selected sites, and developing strategies to increase visibility by leveraging help from resources such as SNS, apps, Open Access, and librarians.

### Description:

#### *Purpose and Intended Audience*

Scholars are increasingly asked to report on the impact, productivity, and citation counts for their research by administrators, colleagues, external peer reviewers, and others when considered for tenure and promotion. Further, scholarly work is usually created and disseminated digitally, with new platforms and metrics that render this work and its impact visible. These factors necessitate that researchers craft and solidify a scholarly identity: endeavors that allow them to promote their brand (Brigham, 2016) and build their reputations. Ignoring this growing trend may primarily affect novice researchers' ability to reach their maximum potential.

New platforms and metrics such as ORCID IDs (Akers et al., 2016) and the use of specialized academic social networking sites (SNS) (Ovadia, 2014) facilitate the creation of scholarly identities. Researchers have connected achievements, such as tenure, to altmetrics gathered from

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forums like ResearchGate (Megwalu, 2015) and Academia.edu (Ortega, 2014), and linked academic library service to scholarly identity-related assistance via SNS profiles (Ward et al., 2015; Reed et al., 2016). However, a gap exists in understanding and measuring the potential benefits of these platforms and metrics. Further, scant research provides guidelines concerning how scholars can best invest their limited time and make appropriate choices regarding digital tools, including SNS. This research could be critical in addressing these gaps and assisting scholars to establish and advance their unique space in academia (Thelwall & Kousha, 2014, 2017).

This workshop will foster discussion about constructing and upholding a scholarly identity and leveraging resources such as apps, Open Access platforms, and librarians, to assist in tracking achievements and reaching professional goals.

*Proposed Format:*

The workshop will commence with a brief presentation from each facilitator to initiate discussion points concerning the creation and cultivation of scholarly identities at various stages of an academic career. We will then report on preliminary results from an exploratory study informed by ~25 semi-structured interviews with scholars, doctoral students, and academic librarians that reveal how individuals currently utilize tools to further their scholarly identities and what type of assistance they would like.

Facilitators and their perspectives are:

- Marie L. Radford, Full professor in Library and Information Science (LIS) at a Research I university
- Lynn Silipigni Connaway, Senior research scientist and director of user research at a non-profit organization
- Vanessa Kitzie, Recent Ph.D. in her first year as tenure-track Assistant Professor in LIS at a Research I university
- Diana Floegel, First year Ph.D. student in LIS at a Research I university
- Gary P. Radford, Full professor and Department Chairperson in Communication at a 4 year private university
- Mary Chayko, Teaching professor in Communication and Information and Sociologist at a Research I university

Following the panel presentations, organizers will facilitate two types of breakout sessions among workshop attendees. These two sessions are:

- 1) Discussion groups centering on the following questions:

- What are the needs of scholars when establishing and furthering their scholarly identities?
  - How can scholars engage in effective digital practices to establish and further their scholarly identities?
    - How can information institutions, like libraries, help scholars to engage in these effective digital practices?
  - What would an ideal service or resource to assist with the creation and maintenance of scholarly identity look like?
  - What do scholars identify as barriers to establishing and furthering their scholarly identities?
    - What resources (e.g., apps, SNS, Open Access platforms, librarians) do scholars identify that help them overcome these barriers? How effective are these resources?
- 2) Hands-on sandbox sessions led by facilitators who will demonstrate selected digital tools (such as ORCID, Twitter, ResearchGate) and lead individual participants in exploring their affordances and establishing accounts.

We will engage and focus attendees by providing these two breakout opportunities. Following these, groups will report out their ideas, discoveries, and conclusions. We will wrap-up with a session-wide discussion and Q&A.

*Goals or Outcomes:*

This workshop has four goals:

1. To identify key practices to establish and further scholarly identity online.
2. To identify barriers to these practices.
3. To identify how to overcome these barriers, and to learn about helpful resources.
4. To provide practical assistance with discovering and using digital tools.

Results from the presentation will inform guidelines and future directions for both practice and research related to establishing one's scholarly identity online. These results will be disseminated by facilitators through digital tools demonstrated during the session, posting of a write-up of the breakout sessions on the conference website, and submission/publication of an article to a scholarly journal.

*Relevance to the iConference:*

The iConference brings together an international group of scholars ranging from students to seasoned academics from varying disciplines. The engagement of these diverse attendees will help inform guidelines and future directions for both practice and research from a global perspective. This workshop will attract and benefit researchers across all levels, enable individuals from various scholarly backgrounds to unite around a common and salient topic, and provide practical takeaways on digital tool use that scholars can immediately implement.

The topic also fits well within this year's conference theme, *Transforming Digital Worlds*, by taking a critical look at the rising popularity of academically-oriented digital tools and offering suggestions for how researchers can strategically use them. Increasingly scholars are asked to demonstrate their impact through various metrics including citation counts. Creating a scholarly identity and cultivating a highly visible reputation are growing concerns among academics. This workshop explores these concepts from multiple angles and provides a space in which attendees could listen to, discuss, and share various perspectives, as well as gain first-hand experience with these online tools. Presently no current agenda or guidelines exist for researchers wanting to establish a social media presence and mold their scholarly identity. This interactive session provides a vital opportunity for researchers looking to transform an increasingly important, yet still largely underutilized and confusing aspect of our digital presence.

**Duration:** Half-day format

**Number of Expected Attendees:** 50

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