



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP GRANTS FOR LIBRARIES

Sample Application LG-259666-OLS-26
Project Category: Planning

New York University, Division of Libraries, Elmer Holmes
Bobst Library

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$148,175
Amount of cost share:	\$0

New York University's Elmer Holmes Bobst Library will develop a shared framework to support students engaging with data, leading to targeted data-search instruction, improved data-related services, and strategic allocation of resources. In collaboration with partner libraries, the project aims to identify common patterns, challenges students face in their data-seeking process, and gaps in academic library support for data-seeking instruction and services. Building on these insights, the project will develop a prototype shared curricular framework to guide targeted data-search instruction and improve library data-finding services. Additionally, it will design a flexible, modular study on data-seeking behaviors that can be adapted to different library environments, allowing for ongoing evaluation and refinement of instructional strategies to further enhance data access and support.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program to which you are applying.

Exploring University Students' Data Seeking Behaviors in the Social Sciences

1. Introduction

New York University (NYU) is requesting a **National Leadership Grant for Libraries (NLG-L)** in the amount of **\$148,175** to conduct a two-year planning project exploring data-seeking behaviors among social science students in higher education. This project aligns with the **Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Agency-Level Goal 1**, which champions lifelong learning, and is closely tied to the **NLG-L Program Goal Objective 1.1** by serving the public's learning needs through libraries and archives. The rapid growth of empirical research in the social sciences has significantly increased demands for effective data discovery. The abundance of datasets, both in volume and variety, provides richer research opportunities for students but also poses greater challenges in their data-seeking efforts. These challenges are further intensified by the growth of generative artificial intelligence and AI-enabled search tools, which are reshaping how students formulate queries, interact with search systems, and evaluate potential data sources. In response, academic libraries have an important mission to help students effectively find and use data that match their research needs while also enhancing their overall data literacy. This project seeks to deepen our understanding of how social science students in higher education navigate the process of finding data by observing their exploratory searches in open online environments. In collaboration with the libraries at Belmont University, Skidmore College, and the University of Connecticut (UConn), it aims to identify common patterns, challenges students face in their data-seeking process, and gaps in academic library support for data-seeking instruction and services. Building on these insights, the project will develop a prototype shared curricular framework to guide targeted data-search instruction and improve library data-finding services. Additionally, it will design a flexible, modular study on data-seeking behaviors that can be adapted to different library environments, allowing for ongoing evaluation and refinement of instructional strategies to further enhance data access and support.

2. Project Justification

Challenges in Data Discovery

The growth of empirical research in the social sciences has significantly increased the demand for a broad range of datasets. With the expansion of online data (Noy & Benjelloun, 2020), the open data movement, and technological advancements, researchers now have access to vast data resources to support their research goals. However, a significant gap remains between data availability and researchers' ability to effectively locate and use these data. A 2020 global survey of 1,677 respondents across 105 countries found that 73% encountered challenges, while 19% reported significant difficulties in finding data (Gregory et al., 2020). Similarly, Friedrich (2020) surveyed 1,388 social scientists and found that over half struggled to access survey data relevant to their research topics, which posed a major obstacle in the data-seeking process.

Unlike literature searching, which is widely studied and well understood in library and information science research (Koesten et al., 2020), data discovery involves more complex and multidimensional information needs (Faniel et al., 2016; Faniel & Yakel, 2017; Dixit et al., 2018; Gregory et al., 2020). Data searching, particularly when conducted in open-ended environments, leads to affective and cognitive uncertainties (Krämer et al., 2021), as users balance iterative learning and investigation activities while simultaneously confronting uncertainties about both the available information and the nature of the task.

The complexity of the current data search landscape further compounds these challenges, as researchers must navigate multiple platforms, including general-purpose web search engines such as Google, dataset repositories such as ICPSR and Zenodo, and dataset meta-portals such as DataCite (Sostek et al., 2024). Navigating dataset search results is often more time-consuming than navigating textual documents because of the complexity of dataset metadata (Kern & Mathiak, 2015). Moreover, most data retrieval systems provide insufficient dataset-specific information in search results (Kern & Mathiak, 2015; Brickley et al., 2019), making it difficult for users to evaluate retrieved data for potential reuse.

Advancements in generative AI are further reshaping the landscape of data discovery. Generative AI enhances discoverability by streamlining user queries and enabling more intuitive search processes (Thakur & Tyagi, 2024). LLM-powered chatbots and virtual assistants can guide users through data discovery and support secondary data use through data synthesis and transformation, helping researchers assess data fitness for reuse. Generative AI also increases the efficiency of data creation and extraction (Patiny & Godin, 2023), contributing to the growth of reusable datasets. However, the use of generative AI also introduces significant challenges for data searching. Large language models are known to produce hallucinated or unreliable content (Ji et al., 2023), and AI-mediated search systems often lack transparency and explainability in how results are retrieved and presented (Arrieta et al., 2020; Bommasani et al., 2021). In addition, unresolved ethical, legal, and provenance uncertainties surrounding data sources and reuse conditions further complicate AI-assisted data discovery (Geburu et al., 2021; Weidinger et al., 2021). Similar to issues observed in AI-mediated text searching, these limitations directly affect data search processes, particularly as the growing volume and complexity of available datasets make locating and evaluating suitable data increasingly difficult.

These issues and complexities are particularly acute in the social sciences, where researchers commonly need to interpret complex data documentation to understand key details such as methodology, data quality, and sample characteristics (Friedrich, 2020; Million et al., 2023). For less experienced researchers, evaluating relevance presents even greater challenges due to lack of experience and training (Faniel et al., 2012). Social science students, in particular, often struggle to locate, evaluate, and select suitable datasets for their research due to their limited research experience and insufficient training in data discovery and evaluation (Friedrich, 2020; Krämer et al., 2021). While professional networks play a critical role in data discovery, as researchers often rely on community-shared information, these networks typically expand with experience and seniority, which makes them far less accessible to junior researchers and students.

Library Support for Data Discovery

Given all these challenges, academic libraries have not sufficiently addressed the need for effective data-seeking support. Academic libraries have traditionally provided services to help locate numeric data, similar to answering reference questions and guiding users to relevant datasets (Adam, 1982). The introduction of Research Data Services (RDS) has greatly expanded library support to include all stages of the research data cycle in the past decade (Pryor et al., 2014). Several library studies have begun exploring this issue more from the perspective of service providers with a specific focus. For example, Lin and Wang (2019) examined data reference and collection information in 83 university data service web sites and found that many institutions provide insufficient collection information, such as inconsistencies in data-type descriptions and heterogeneity in data sourcing. In another study, Griem et al.

(2022) noted that datasets remain less discoverable within Integrated Library Systems (ILS) due to limited descriptions. Lin and Wang (2019) pointed out that the role of libraries in facilitating data discovery has been overlooked and inadequately studied. However, there is a lack of comprehensive research on the full range of data discovery support provided by libraries, particularly in addressing the evolving search behaviors of university students. This gap limits libraries' ability to effectively support data discovery for university students, including those in the social sciences.

Compared to traditional resources, such as journal articles and books, which are more easily found in library catalogs, datasets remain significantly less discoverable in patrons' searches within library resources. This disparity persists despite libraries having served as central portals for data resources for over three decades. Universities commonly teach literature search techniques, and libraries almost universally offer information literacy instruction with either a general or disciplinary focus. As reliance on data grows across various disciplines, libraries are also increasingly working to raise awareness and provide instruction on data literacy. However, RDS services tend to focus more on general research data management, statistical support, geospatial services, and visualization services (MacDougall & Ruediger, 2024), with less emphasis on enhancing data searching literacy and instruction.

Emerging AI Developments and Research Gaps

Once again, the growth of AI tools and methods is reshaping this landscape. Recent research indicates that artificial intelligence is increasingly embedded across library discovery and access systems, reference services, instruction, and metadata workflows. Generative AI and chatbots are reshaping user interactions with discovery platforms (Kim, 2025; Malakar et al., 2025) and supporting virtual reference and question triage (Ayinde et al., 2025). At the same time, librarians are incorporating AI literacy into information literacy instruction (Del Castillo & Kelly, 2025; Montesi et al., 2025), while technical services research highlights growing use of NLP and machine learning for automated metadata generation (González-Espinoza et al., 2025). These developments suggest that AI is transforming both library practices and user experiences of discovery and access.

Recent studies (e.g., Krämer et al., 2021; Sostek et al., 2024) have highlighted a persistent gap in understanding how researchers locate data and which library services, infrastructure, and tools best support this process. Academic library patrons still face considerable challenges in discovering datasets. Data-seeking literacy, an equally critical skill directly relevant to everyday research practices, has not received comparable attention (Krämer et al., 2021). As Krämer et al. (2021) noted in their study, participants felt that *dataset search should be part of the university curricula to enhance dataset search literacy*.

Research on how researchers locate data in open environments, particularly in the social sciences, remains limited (Krämer et al., 2021). To the best of our knowledge, no studies have specifically examined how student researchers seek data in open environments for task-oriented purposes, tasks commonly undertaken by senior undergraduates and entry-level graduate students in the social sciences at U.S. institutions. Furthermore, although the use of generative Artificial Intelligence to support college students' learning has increased, with studies examining its effects on information literacy and academic performance (e.g., Jose et al., 2024; Sun & Zhou, 2024), only a small body of work has begun to explore

how large language models support data-seeking activities (Liu et al., 2024; Kreutz et al., 2025). The role of libraries in facilitating AI-supported data seeking remains largely unexplored.

This project builds on an initial alpha test study, funded by an internal grant from the NYU Office of the Provost, that explored the data-seeking behaviors of senior undergraduate and graduate social science students at NYU. The NYU test study served as an early-stage investigation to assess feasibility and test research methods. This proposed NLG-L grant project will expand on this foundation by engaging social science students from both public and private institutions across the U.S., representing various research activity levels, institutional sizes, and geographic locations. It aims to further investigate student data-seeking behaviors in higher education, identify gaps in library support for online data discovery and instructional services, and promote data-search literacy while raising awareness within the academic library community.

Target Audience and Beneficiaries

The target audience and beneficiaries of this project include social science researchers, particularly higher education students with limited research experience who face challenges in finding, evaluating, and using data in open online environments. It also serves as a valuable resource for academic librarians, subject librarians in the social sciences, research librarians, data librarians, and information specialists at universities, colleges, and research institutions who support data searching and assess their capacity to meet students' growing data-seeking and data literacy needs through instruction and research services, including in AI-mediated discovery contexts. Additionally, the project features a modular study package designed to support in-house investigations of data-seeking behaviors and facilitate adoption at other institutions to enhance research and instructional practices. It will also benefit social science educators in higher education more broadly and is relevant to institutions seeking to strengthen data access infrastructure and improve curricular approaches to data-search instruction. Professionals in metadata development, collection strategies, and data repositories who facilitate data discovery may also find value in its findings. In the long term, the project will establish a foundation for future initiatives aimed at developing training modules on foundational data skills for library practitioners. Furthermore, it has the potential to advance Library and Information Science (LIS) research by examining how students navigate and utilize data resources across disciplines.

3. Project Work Plan

Project Design

The proposed project would accomplish the following goals:

1. **Investigate data-seeking behaviors:** Examine how social science students in higher education navigate data discovery by identifying common patterns, key challenges, frequently used resources, and gaps in academic library support, particularly in services and instruction.
2. **Develop a prototype library support framework:** Create a structured framework to promote data-search literacy through targeted instruction and improve library services for online data discovery.
3. **Design and share a modular study package:** Develop a flexible study package, licensed under Creative Commons BY-NC, to support in-house investigations of data-seeking behaviors and facilitate adoption at other institutions for enhancing research and instructional practices.

Project Team and Responsibilities

The project team will draw on its expertise in data literacy, data discovery, and project management while collaborating with key librarians who support data discovery at participating libraries, along with experts in data-seeking studies and user experience (UX) research. In addition, experienced academic librarians on the advisory board with extensive expertise in data-search support will share their insights and contribute to the project's development. The project has obtained letters of intent from all three institutions, along with commitments from key librarians, experts, consultants, and email consent from advisory board members.

1) Core Team Members

Principal Investigator (PI) – Jiebei Luo, Assistant Curator and Financial and Economic Data Analysis Librarian at NYU, will lead the project. Luo brings extensive experience in data literacy instruction and data discovery. She will oversee the project, direct key activities, including project team formation and environmental scan, and coordinate data analysis, reporting, and the development of a nationwide survey.

Project Evaluator (PE) – Yan (Grace) Liu, Associate Professor and Business Librarian at West Chester University's FHG Library, has secured funding for ten grants at the university, state, and national levels, with projects focused on data quality literacy, information literacy, and student success. Yan has led an IMLS National Forum grant on data quality literacy and currently leads an IMLS National Leadership Grant on enhancing students' career research skills.

Graduate Assistant (Hourly) (GA), to be hired). The project will hire a GA and offer a research assistantship opportunity for graduate students interested in data librarianship or related academic fields. The GA will support project logistics, assist with analyzing study recordings and content, and edit transcripts.

2) Participating Libraries (PL) and Key Librarians (KL)

The three participating libraries offer different perspectives on research activity levels, student populations, library staff capacities, and collection budgets, providing a rich context for examining data discovery and support services.

PL1: The UConn Library at the University of Connecticut, located in Storrs, Connecticut, supports one of the nation's top public research universities. As the university's main academic library system, it provides extensive collections, research support services, and specialized resources.

- **KL1:** Edward Junhao Lim – Business & Entrepreneurship Librarian at the University of Connecticut. Lim previously held roles at NYU Shanghai and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore, specializing in business research, user experience, and outreach. He holds a B.Soc.Sci. from Singapore Management University, an M.Sc. from NTU, and an Executive MBA from Quantic School of Business and Technology.

PL2: The Lucy Scribner Library at Skidmore College, located in Saratoga Springs, New York, supports a small private liberal arts college known for its strong undergraduate focus. The library provides a broad range of resources and research support to foster academic exploration and student learning.

- **KL2:** Jennifer Moore – Social Sciences Librarian at Skidmore College. Moore supports the Economics, International Affairs, Management & Business, and Politics Departments. She was previously an Instruction Services Librarian at SUNY Cortland. She holds an MSIS from SUNY Albany and a BA in English from Mount Holyoke College.

PL3: The Lila D. Bunch Library at Belmont University, located in Nashville, Tennessee, supports a mid-sized private institution with strong liberal arts and professional programs. The library provides research support, digital resources, and data literacy initiatives to enhance learning and scholarship.

- **KL3:** Ryan Yoakum – Business and Data Services Librarian at Belmont University. Yoakum supports research and data literacy and serves as the library liaison to the Jack C. Massey College of Business and the Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business. He holds an MLIS and a BA in History/Religion from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He supports developing resources to increase data literacy and skills across campus.

3) Study Design Experts (Exp)

Exp1 - Dr. Kathleen Gregory, Researcher at the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS) at Leiden University and a Research Fellow at the Research on Research Institute, will contribute her expertise in data practices and information behavior to support the study design and analysis.

Exp2 - Dr. Brigitte Mathiak, Researcher at GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, specializes in Knowledge Technologies for the Social Sciences and FAIR Data. She will contribute her expertise in data discovery to improve research infrastructure and help refine data collection methods and analysis.

Exp3 - Dr. Rong Tang, Professor Emerita of Library and Information Science at Simmons University and Director of the UX and MIS programs, will apply her expertise in UX research and data competencies in academic librarianship to provide guidance on the study design, data collection, and analysis processes.

4) Advisory Board: Academic Librarians (AL) Specializing in Data Literacy and Data-Seeking Support

AL1 - Bobray Bordelon, Economics and Finance Librarian at Princeton University, will share his expert opinions on data discovery and academic research support. At Princeton, Bordelon provides support for data access, financial databases, and quantitative research and assists researchers in navigating complex data sources and analytical tools.

AL2 - Wendy Pothier, Associate Professor and Business and Economics Librarian at the University of New Hampshire, will contribute her expertise in data discovery, research support, and business information literacy. At University of New Hampshire, Pothier serves as a liaison to business and economics programs and supports researchers in accessing and utilizing financial and economic data sources.

Project Schedule

All Phases: The **PI** and **PE** will meet monthly to ensure the project stays on track, with performance evaluated during regular meetings through the entire project. They will closely monitor progress to identify early signs of bottlenecks. The **PE** will provide suggestions for the **PI**'s meetings and collaborations with key librarians, study design experts, consultants, and expert librarians, ensuring project milestones are met on schedule. Assessments will be conducted monthly, quarterly, and annually throughout the project.

1) Phase I: Pre-Project Planning (September 2026 - March 2027)

Activity 1: Project Team Formation and Environmental Scan

In this phase, the **PI** will assemble the project team and complete the multi-site IRB protocol for research involving human participants across multiple institutions. The key steps include:

Activity 1.1: Team Hiring: The **PI** will hire a **GA** at NYU to manage tasks in Phases II and III.

Activity 1.2: Coordination with Experts: The **PI** will finalize the working schedule with experts in data-seeking studies, UX, data competencies in academic librarianship, and librarians specializing in data-seeking support.

Activity 2: Data-Seeking Study Design

The exploratory data-seeking studies are task-based and designed to be completed by each participant virtually via zoom within 75 minutes. Following Krämer et al.'s (2021) study format, the study consists of: i) Data-Seeking Observation (45 minutes), where participants will work on a data-centric task in an open online environment while their search processes are being observed; and ii) Semi-Structured Interview (30 minutes), where the **PI** will examine participant's search strategies, dataset selection criteria, challenges encountered, and their experiences or expectations regarding library instruction and data discovery support.

The **PI** will oversee:

*Activity 2.1: Collaborate with data-seeking experts **Exp1** and **Exp2*** to design the study, refine

data-seeking tasks, process reflection questions, and finalize data collection and analysis methods;

*Activity 2.2: Consult the UX expert **Exp3*** to ensure the accessibility and usability of study materials, including in-study prompts and interview questions; and

*Activity 2.3: Consult the expert librarians **AL1** and **AL2*** to review data search tasks, interview questions on library instruction and discovery support, and one-on-one interview questions for collaborating librarians.

Activity 3: Multi-Site IRB Protocol Approval

Once the study protocol is finalized, the **PI** will lead:

Activity 3.1 Submit a Multi-Site IRB Application: The **PI** will apply to the NYU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval to conduct user studies across participating institutions. The application will include the study description, data collection methods, participant recruitment process, and collaboration letters from participating libraries.

Activity 3.2: Finalize Project Participation: The **PI** will coordinate with participating libraries and key librarians, secure an official collaboration letter from the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP), and obtain IRB recognition from participating institutions.

2) Phase II: Data-Seeking Study at Participating Libraries (February 2027 - January 2028)

Activity 4: Conducting the Data-Seeking Study at Participating Libraries

In this phase, the **PI** and **GA** will collaborate with the **KLs** to conduct the data-seeking study with students in their institutions. The study and data collection are expected to be completed at the three institutions between the Fall 2027 and Spring 2028 semesters

For each onsite study at the participating libraries (**PL**):

Activity 4.1: The **PI** and **GA** will collaborate with the **KL** to set up the study by providing digital and print recruitment materials and addressing any questions; the **GA** will develop recruitment and study materials, set up the project calendar, organize the data storage drive, schedule study sessions, monitor progress, and collect and organize data.

Activity 4.2: **KL** will be responsible for recruiting 20–25 social science students (junior, senior, or first-year graduate students), administering the study, serving as the on-site contact for communication and support, addressing questions, and distributing compensation in the form of gift cards.

Activity 4.3: The **PI** will conduct one-on-one sessions with recruited students and interview the **KL** to discuss their support for data-seeking activities and the challenges they observe in the work.

3) Phase III: Data Analysis, Reporting, Modular Study Package (June 2027 – August 2028)

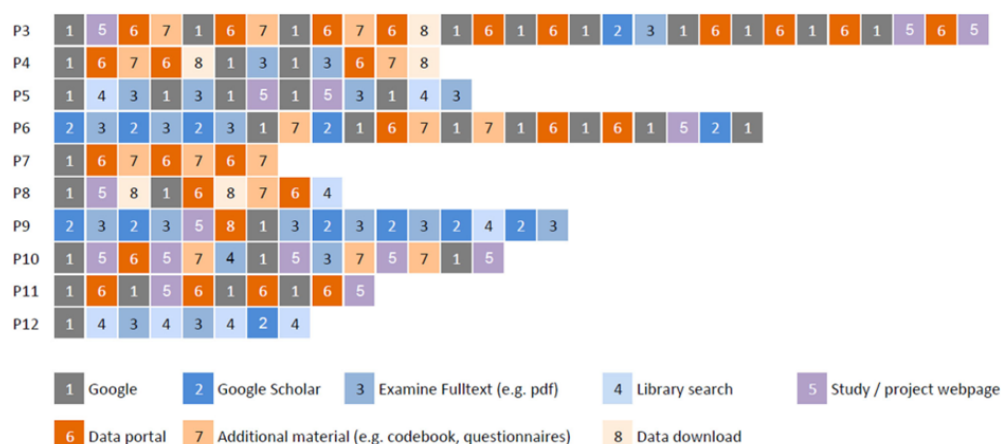
Activity 5: Data Analysis

Following Krämer et al. (2021), participants' data-seeking activities will be captured through Zoom recordings of their shared screens. By reviewing each recorded session,

Activity 5.1: the **GA** will code the participant's data-seeking process, classifying the online locations visited into four primary data discovery channels: general web, data portals, literature, and professional networks, with an additional category for undefined channels.

Activity 5.2: The **PI** will consolidate and analyze the sequence of resource consultations to map participants' navigation processes. Based on this data, an activity diagram (See Figure 1 for an example) will be generated to illustrate data-seeking behaviors at each institution and aggregated to gain further insights across institutions.

Figure 1: Sample Activity Diagram of Data-Seeking from Krämer et al. (2021)



Interview Data Analysis: The second part of this phase will involve analyzing follow-up interview conversations with student participants and one-on-one interviews with participating librarians using content analysis. The planned procedures are as follows.

Activity 5.3: The **PI** and **GA** will manually code and categorize audio recordings in MAXQDA, with transcripts generated using Otter.ai.

Activity 5.4 The **PI** will consult **Exp1** and **Exp2** on data analysis and examine search strategies, decision-making criteria, and challenges encountered during data searches to gain deeper insights into participants' data-seeking behaviors and choices. Thematic analysis will be conducted via MAXQDA, guided by an initial codebook with definitions and examples. The coding process will integrate both deductive and inductive methods (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

Activity 6: Development of Modular Data-Seeking Study Package

The **PI** and **GA** will collaborate to develop a digital, modular data-seeking study package designed to support institutions interested in conducting local research on data-seeking behaviors. This package will be made freely available under a CC BY-NC license on the project website.

The study package will include:

- Essential Templates and Guides
 - IRB & Consent Templates – Pre-designed documents to simplify Institutional Review Board submissions and participant consent procedures.
 - Study Implementation Materials – Structured resources, including study prompts and interview protocols, to support data collection.
 - Recruitment Resources – Ready-to-use outreach materials, such as email templates and advertisements, to facilitate participant engagement.
 - Data Management Guidance – Best practices for organizing, storing, and securing research data efficiently.
- Data-Seeking Activity Data Collection Templates
 - Data-Seeking Activity Collection Template – A structured template for recording and analyzing participants' data-seeking activities.
 - Observation & Field Notes Template – A standardized form to document researcher observations during sessions.
- Interview Data Analysis
 - Structured Interview Questions – Predefined questions for participant and librarian interviews.
 - Codebook Template – Defines code names, descriptions, example quotes, and application notes to guide coding.

Activity 7: Finalizing and Disseminating Project Deliverables

The project deliverables will be widely distributed under the CC BY-NC license to maximize impact and will include the following items, along with the **modular data-seeking study package**.

Activity 7.1: A **white paper** summarizing the findings from data-seeking activity analyses, participant interviews, and **KL** interviews will be drafted by the research team and shared with the project advisory board for input and feedback. The report will examine how social science students in higher education navigate data discovery, identifying common patterns, key challenges, frequently used resources, and gaps in academic library support, particularly in services and instruction. It will provide insights into students' data-seeking processes and the obstacles they encounter and offer recommendations for improving research support and instructional strategies.

Activity 7.2: A **best practice guide** will support the development of data-seeking library workshops and course plans and provide a pragmatic framework for librarians interested in designing and implementing data-seeking literacy programs in their libraries.

Activity 7.3 The **project website** will serve as the central hub for sharing project findings and resources, including the white paper, study package, and best practices guide. Additionally, the website will feature recommendations and an action plan to help institutions promote students' data-seeking competencies, allowing for adaptation to local research and instructional needs. All resources will be made publicly

available and will help equip academic libraries with practical strategies to strengthen data literacy initiatives.

4. Project Results

Project Deliverables

The project will advance knowledge and understanding of data-seeking behaviors among social science students in higher education, with the goal of supporting data search literacy, enhancing library data services, and informing library curriculum development. Key deliverables include i) a **white paper** summarizing findings from data-seeking activity analyses, participant interviews, and KL interviews, identifying key challenges, common patterns, and gaps in academic library support, and providing recommendations for improving research support and instructional strategies. ii) A **modular data-seeking study package** (CC BY-NC) will provide IRB templates, study materials, recruitment resources, data collection tools, and interview analysis templates, enabling institutions to conduct local research on data-seeking behaviors. iii) A **best practices guide** will offer a practical framework for developing data-seeking library workshops and course plans and equip librarians with strategies to design data-seeking literacy programs and address data quality challenges. iv) A **project website** will serve as the central hub for sharing project findings and resources, including the white paper, study package, and best practices guide, along with recommendations and an action plan to help institutions strengthen students' data-seeking competencies and improve library instruction and services. All resources will be publicly available to promote broader adoption in academic libraries.

Advancing Data Literacy and Shaping Future Library Support

In the *short term*, this project will help academic libraries in the U.S. assess their capacity to support students' growing data-seeking and data literacy needs. It will shed light on key questions such as how prepared librarians are to address these evolving demands, where they acquire the knowledge and skills to assist students in data discovery, and what professional development opportunities or new models are needed to strengthen data-related instruction and services. In the *long term*, the project will establish a foundation for future initiatives aimed at developing training modules on foundational data skills for library practitioners. Additionally, it has the potential to advance Library and Information Science (LIS) research by exploring how students navigate and utilize data resources across disciplines. This research can deepen understanding of information needs, search strategies, and the effectiveness of library services, emphasizing the importance of studying data-seeking behaviors and data literacy across academic contexts.

Distribution and Promotion of Project Deliverables

Besides making the Best Practices Resource Guide and white paper publicly available on the project website, the project team plans to present findings at major national library conferences, including the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference, the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Conference, and the International Association for Social Science Information Services and Technology (IASSIST) Conference. Additionally, the project aims to publish its findings in academic journals such as *College & Research Libraries* and *Journal of Academic Librarianship*.

Schedule of Completion														
			Timeline											
	Activity - Year1	Project Lead	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
All Phases	Monthly meetings & quarterly formal assessment	PI, PE												
	Phase I: Pre-Forum Planning													
1.1	Recruit a GA at NYU to manage tasks in Phases II and III	PI												
1.2	Coordinate and finalize the schedule with experts	PI												
2.1	Design the data-seeking study method	Exp1, Exp2, PI												
2.2	Evaluate UX accessibility and usability of study materials	Exp3, PI												
2.3	Review data search tasks and interview questions	PI, AL1, AL2												
3.1	Apply for Multi-Site IRB	PI												
3.2	Finalize participation and secure IRB acknowledgment	P1, KL1, KL2, KL3												
	Phase II: Data-Seeking Study at Participating Libraries													
4.1	Set up onsite study - PL1	KL1, PI, GA												
4.2	Manage study recruitment, scheduling, and incentives - PL1	KL1, PI, GA												
4.3	Conduct one-on-one sessions with students and KL - PL1	KL1, PI, GA												
4.1	Set up onsite study - PL2	KL2, PI, GA												
4.2	Manage study recruitment, scheduling, and incentives - PL2	KL2, PI, GA												
4.3	Conduct one-on-one sessions with students and KL - PL2	KL2, PI, GA												
	Phase III: Data Analysis, Reporting, Modular Study Package													
5.1	Code participants' data-seeking activity data	GA												
5.2	Consolidate and analyze Data-Seeking Activity data	PI												
5.3	Code and analyze interview data	PI, GA												

Schedule of Completion														
			Timeline											
	Activity - Year2	Project Lead	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
All Phases	Monthly meetings & quarterly formal assessment	PI, PE												
	Phase II: Data-Seeking Study at Participating Libraries													
4.1	Set up onsite study - PL3	KL3, PI,GA												
4.2	Manage study recruitment, scheduling, and incentives - PL3	KL3, PI,GA												
4.3	Conduct one-on-one sessions with students and KL - PL3	KL3, PI,GA												
	Phase III: Data Analysis, Reporting, Modular Study Package													
5.1	Code participants' data-seeking activity data	GA												
5.2	Consolidate and analyze Data-Seeking Activity data	PI												
5.3	Code analyze interview data and	PI, GA												
5.4	Consult with a data discovery expert for data analysis	Exp1, Exp2, PI												
6	Develop a modular data-seeking study package	PI, GA												
7.1	Finalize the white paper	PI, GA												
7.2	Finalize the Best Practices Resource Guide	PI												
7.3	Build and promote the project website	PI, GA												
	Principal Investigator (PI): Jiebei Luo; Project Evaluator (PE): Yan (Grace) Liu; Graduate Assistant (Hourly) (GA, to be hired) Key Librarian (KL): KL1 Edward Junhao Lim, KL2 Jennifer Moore, KL3 Ryan Yoakum Study Design Experts (Exp): Exp1 Dr. Kathleen Gregory, Exp2 Dr. Brigitte Mathiak, Exp3 Dr. Rong Tang Academic Librarians (AL) AL1- Bobray Bordelon, AL2- Wendy Pothier.													