Research in Service to Practice Grants; Continuing Education, Lifelong Learning: **Diversity by Design: Scaling and Fostering Diverse and Inclusive Intergenerational Communities of Practice**

Statement of Need: A team of researchers from the University of Pittsburgh, University of California, Irvine, Queens College, and The Pennsylvania State University partnering with the iSchool Inclusion Institute (i3) requests $390,749 for our 3-year research project to scale and foster diverse and inclusive intergenerational communities of practice. The iSchool Inclusion Institute (i3), an undergraduate research and leadership development program, successfully developed a model that recruits underrepresented students into LIS / IS graduate programs and professions. Based on eight years of longitudinal program evaluation data and the 150 i3 alumni and underrepresented LIS faculty mentors who provided feedback at the most recent annual i3 alumni reunion, a clear community need has emerged. i3 successfully *recruits* underrepresented students into LIS / IS graduate programs and professions, yet there is a clear need for intergenerational infrastructure that *supports* and *retains* i3 alumni and faculty throughout their graduate and professional careers. The needs of the i3 community are echoed in IMLS' 2017 November Meeting Report[3], which indicates that students of color frequently find themselves "alone" in LIS courses and POC faculty report similar isolation in their LIS programs. We seek to scale i3's undergraduate student-facing model to one of lifelong learning that also supports intergenerational networks of underrepresented LIS graduate students and professionals. Prior to designing or building this infrastructure geared towards retention and development, this qualitative research project: 1) explores the mechanisms that foster the feelings of community and belonging in i3, and 2) identifies i3 alumni and faculty-specific needs, as well as perceived gaps in support. We will build on and scale i3's success and translate findings into a model for diversity by design[1] that addresses recruitment, retention, and support for underrepresented scholars as undergraduate / graduate students, faculty, and LIS professionals.

Significance: This project builds on i3's empirically evaluated success.[6] Each year, ~25 students from different majors and universities across the U.S. participate in a 20 month-long experience, beginning with Summer Institute 1 (SI1). At the end of SI1, students return to their home institutions to complete a yearlong, distributed team research project and return the following summer for Summer Institute 2 (SI2). Following SI2, teams collaborate on publications and attend conferences. There have been 8 cohorts (185 students) with the following demographic composition: 57% women, 49% Black, 23% Hispanic/Latinx, 12% Asian, 5% Multiracial, and 2% Pacific Islander. Noteworthy achievements include: a 90% program retention rate, 35 student publications at peer-reviewed IS/LIS academic conferences, 52% of scholars who have completed undergrad and i3 have enrolled in graduate school (2 times the national average), ~70% of scholars who have enrolled in LIS/ IS-related graduate programs were first exposed to the field during i3, and *100% of i3 scholars who have applied to graduate programs have been accepted to their programs.* Additionally, i3 produces impactful research where inclusion is "built-in" to projects: e.g., building/testing museum exhibits to preserve Inca Culture (collaboration with the Smithsonian),[7] using Black Music to teach programming,[8] developing inclusive English as a Second Language (ESL) mobile apps,[9] and exploring how immigrant college students with depression use social media.[10] Projects have diverse teams of researchers and serve underrepresented populations. PI Booth (i3 Director/Co-PI on program grant), PI Eikey (i3 Asst. Director), PI Sanchez, and PI Yarger (both program advisors / mentors since 2010) collaborated on developing i3 curriculum and publications on underrepresentation [11-13] and marginalized user groups.[14-17]

   i3 alumni and faculty express a need for infrastructure that supports them beyond the current undergraduate model and emphasize that *they want this support to come from the i3 community that they belong to and trust*. While the program has been evaluated based on intended goals and outcomes (recruitment, fulfilling learning objectives, building mentorship networks and self-efficacy, etc.), unintended aspects of the program's success (i.e., these expressions of trust) require exploration. i3 scholars, alumni, and faculty frequently refer to the i3 network as their "i3 family" and express levels of belonging, commitment, and trust in this community, which is vital for retention. We want to explore how this sense of "family" evolves in a program, what alumni and faculty need in terms of retention and support, and their perceived gaps in existing resources at their institutions / within the field (ALA, Spectrum, etc.). Research Questions: RQ1a/b focus on exploring how this sense of "family," belonging, and trust emerge, given that underrepresented scholars and faculty often feel isolated in LIS. RQ1a: How do i3 scholars develop and maintain commitment to and trust in

the i3 community? RQ1b: Which formal and informal programmatic structures contribute to this sense of belonging and family? RQa/b examine intergenerational i3 alumni and faculty needs and perceived gaps in resources. RQ2a: What do i3 alumni and faculty in LIS graduate programs and professions need to enhance retention and support? RQ2b: What do i3 alumni and faculty perceive to be the gaps in existing programs and resources?

      i3 has developed a successful undergraduate-focused recruitment model that addresses one piece of the dire need to address underrepresentation in LIS. This research project shifts from recruitment to retention by exploring how the unintended sense of family and belonging emerged in this community and identifying the needs for and gaps in support. IS scholars and professionals We will translate our findings into a model of recruitment and retention to enhance diversity and inclusion in LIS programs and the field as a whole.

Project Design: Our project design has three phases. Year 1 (Planning): We will conduct our literature review to inform our focus group questions. We will schedule separate focus groups for members of each "generation," including current scholars, alumni in graduate programs, alumni in LIS professions, and alumni in LIS faculty positions. Participants will be asked for their insights and experiences with the program, as well as what their needs are in terms of support, retention, and professional growth unique to where they are at in their careers.

Year 2 (Data Collection & Analysis): We will conduct these separate focus groups and analyze the data via open coding. Using these results, we will develop our interview questions and conduct semi-structured interviews with i3 members across "generations," including current scholars, alumni in graduate programs, alumni in LIS professions, as well as junior and senior faculty. These one-on-one interviews will provide a space to more deeply explore the themes that emerged in focus groups and participants' individual experiences.

Year 3 (Member Checking & Dissemination): We will evaluate our results through member-checking interviews and use these findings to develop the diversity by design model. We will publishing preliminary results at LIS conferences such as iConference and ASIS&T throughout the 3 years to gain peer feedback and will disseminate final results via articles in core LIS journals and conference presentations during Year 3.

Diversity Plan: The entirety of the project is based on understanding, developing, and sustaining diverse scholars and communities in LIS. Leveraging our collaboration with i3, we will conduct our research with minority individuals and serve them through our findings and model.

Broad Impact: As it currently exists, i3 has created a community of underrepresented undergraduate / graduate scholars, LIS faculty, and LIS professionals. Much of the formal program structure, however, is aimed at the recruitment of undergraduate students into LIS graduate programs. Alumni and faculty have voiced a strong need for support to aid in retention and success beyond the current undergraduate model. By exploring the formal and informal programmatic elements that facilitated this community of trust, identifying graduate student / faculty / LIS professional needs, and assessing perceived gaps in existing support, this study offers several contributions. The first is a model of intergenerational, lifelong learning that builds and expands on i3's success by addressing recruitment, retention, and inclusivity in LIS. This evolved model begins with student recruitment and scales throughout graduate study and professional trajectories. This model for diversity by design will be disseminated through 3 years of white papers, publications (ALISE, ALA, etc.), reports, and presentations. While this project focuses on researching community experiences, needs, and perceptions, the results can be used to inform, develop, and evaluate formalized infrastructure and academic / professional programming both within and outside of i3.

Budget Summary: $390,749 Total (Direct Costs: $249,680; Indirect Costs: $141,069). Cost Breakdown: Personnel & Fringe Benefits ($44,924 Pittsburgh; $61,029 Queens; $61,683 Penn State; $35,486 UC Irvine); Conference Travel (ASIS&T / iConference: $60,336); Software (4 NVivo Subscriptions: $1,200); Interviews (Participant payment / transcription services: $4,563)

Works Cited: https://tinyurl.com/y7nm98nf