

**Title:** *Information Literacy Instruction: Bridging the PK-20 Gap*

**Project Overview:** ODU is requesting **\$58,405** to support the project **Information Literacy Instruction: Bridging the PK-20 Gap**, an initial investigation aimed at identifying resources and research to support the continuum of information literacy instruction that spans PK-12 through college and university. This project explores the questions:

- 1) *How can PK-12 and academic librarians support information literacy instruction for the Pk-20 learner?*
- 2) *In what ways can the language and purpose of written standards and guidelines be operationalized for PK-20 information Literacy instruction?*
- 3) *What future training and resources are needed for school and academic librarians to increase knowledge on PK-20 information literacy instruction?*

The proposed planning project extends the findings of a crosswalk developed to explore the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) *National School Library Standards Learner Framework* and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (Burns, Gross, Latham, 2019). This research found multiple areas of only limited alignment between the two published documents. There is a lack of consistency in language between the two ALA documents as well as a lack of priority in educational intent for those who use the documents in instruction.

Using a needs assessment perspective this planning project proposes four objectives:

- (1) to understand the current perspective of PK-12 and academic librarians in information literacy instruction at a national level;
- (2) to assess information literacy instruction needs for collaboration across the PK-20 continuum;
- (3) to identify potential resources and training required to facilitate this collaboration;
- (4) to suggest curricula development for PK-12 school librarians and academic librarians on information literacy instruction that bridges PK-20 education.

To achieve these objectives, the researcher will conduct targeted focus groups with instructors who teach information literacy in both the PK-12 and college and university academic setting. Focus groups will include practitioners at the PK-12 level, the academic level, and practitioners who are instructors at both levels and have a unique perspective to share. Outcomes will provide direction for resource development and training in universities, state library workshops, and building an online resource repository. They will also identify research potential in information literacy instruction in the library field.

**Statement of Need and Rationale:** The American Library Association puts forth professional standards for both the school library and college and academic libraries. These standards guide the practice of library professionals. Library standards are regularly updated to reflect changes in pedagogy and best practice. In 2018, AASL released the *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*. These standards include the Framework for Learners, with information literacy instruction embedded within as a set of learner competencies. In 2015 the ACRL division adopted a new guiding document on information literacy instruction, *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*.

Librarians are typically trained to work with either PK-12 students or college and university level students. Very little has been done to promote conversation among library professionals, though the PK-12 student progresses to become the college or university student. Even less has been done to provide a set of resources that promote clear language and guidance establishing uniform information literacy instruction across PK-20.

**Project Design:** This planning project will address information literacy instructors at both the K-12 and college and university level. It will investigate how to bridge information literacy instruction across the PK-20 continuum. Initial focus groups will help identify strengths in practice and noted challenges and barriers to use of the ALA developed AASL *Standards Framework for Learners* and ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* and begin to identify required resources for collaboration among PK-20 practitioners. These focus groups will be recruited through the professional listservs of the ACRL and AASL divisions of the American Library Association, as well as through the broad American Library Association listserv. The PI will also build interest through conference promotion. Building on the findings of the crosswalk research (Burns, Gross, & Latham, 2019), focus group protocols will be developed and deployed to understand the perceptions of instructor ability to effectively use the ALA documents in practice to create a PK-20

continuum of information literacy instruction. Crosswalk and focus groups findings will be used to develop a summer 2022 workshop, for PK-12 and academic librarians to further determine resource needs. Findings will be finalized in fall 2022.

**Demonstrated Expertise:** The lead PI was a member of the editorial board, competitively selected to write the *AASL National School Library Standards*. She has developed multiple training sessions at the national level to assist librarians and stakeholders use the Standards. Additionally, she has conducted initial work exploring information literacy instruction spanning PK-20. She has a demonstrated record of teaching and publishing using the suggested research methods. The faculty contributor is Lead Instruction Librarian for the university and lead Instructor of a general education Information Literacy course enrolling over 1,000 students each year. She teaches and oversees instructors of the course, many are also employed as school librarians.

**Diversity Plan:** Participant selection for focus groups will be considered for geographic representation. Additionally, diverse representation will be attempted, to the extent possible, to include representation of educators from institutions that serve underrepresented groups, school size, and type of institution. Finally, a researcher with a background in diversity, inclusion and equity will review focus group questions for bias.

**National Impact:** The AASL National Standards have been adopted or used as a framework for 22 states since their publication. Additional states have trained school librarians to use the National Standards. Learners nationwide will progress to academic settings with these framing their foundation in information literacy instruction. Research suggests information literacy skills do not readily transfer from one setting to another in an academic setting (Grigg & Dale, 2017). It is critical that attention be given to creating common understanding in information literacy for students continuing from PK-12 through college and academic settings. This project would allow for a national scan of Information Literacy Instruction practices and capture broad perspective on instructional strengths and needs. It will suggest strategies that improve information literacy instruction for all PK-20 students. This project will also inform training of both in-service and pre-service librarians for a national audience.

**Outcomes:** This planning project will assess current information literacy practice, areas for potential alignment and suggestions for collaboration and coordination across the PK-20 field. The researcher will solicit the input of diverse stakeholders to inform the development of these expected outcomes:

- (a) Summary of perceived information literacy instruction needs by both PK-12 and academic librarians;
- (b) Resources suggestions to enhance instruction for PK-12 and academic librarians;
- (c) Strategies to facilitate collaboration among PK-20 information literacy instructors;
- (d) Curricula suggestions for training workshops for both PK-12 and academic librarians.

The outcomes listed above will guide practice and research. These findings will assist in the identification of further resources and tools needed by library professionals challenged to implement information literacy instruction that bridges the PK-20 continuum. These outcomes will form a conceptual framework and provide future directions for research and theory for effective training grounded in collaborative training. The outcomes of this work and the resources suggested have the potential to improve information literacy instruction in both school and academic libraries and learners served.

**Sustainability:** This planning project will provide data necessary for a larger project. The results of this project can be used to plan and develop the required training and resources for effective information literacy instruction materials that aid the PK-20 experience for learners. In order to develop training curricula and resources based on this planning grant's findings, the researcher will submit a full Laura Bush 21<sup>st</sup> Century Project Grant proposal. The MLIS Program at Old Dominion University is a leader in developing and delivering online content and curricula. Materials to meet the identified needs would be developed for wide distribution and would ensure a large population of librarians have access to these resources.

**Budget Summary:** A preliminary budget of **\$58,405** is respectfully requested for this planning grant. This includes direct costs of \$39,455 to include: \$22,075 of summer salary support for the project PI and \$5,000 support for the faculty contributor who will provide expertise and facilitate the workshop (\$3,880 fringe benefits). \$3,000 support for travel. Travel includes registration funding for two national (virtual conferences) to promote and conduct focus groups and attendance at one national conferences to present research findings. Finally, \$5,000 is requested for participant support at on-site, half-day work-shop for IL instructors and \$500 toward participant incentive costs for the convened focus groups. Indirect cost total: **\$18,950**.