

## Expanding Research Success: Partnerships between Librarian Researchers and the Research Facilitator

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Practicing librarians conduct research for a number of reasons. They may use research projects to inform their practice and to aid in decision-making. They may be faculty members at universities and need to develop a program of research for tenure and promotion, or they may be curiosity-driven and use research to make sense of the world around them. However, there can be significant real or perceived obstacles to conducting research. Issues such as lack of confidence, lack of skill, lack of motivation, lack of funds, and lack of support all emerge as barriers when it comes to practicing librarians navigating the research enterprise (Berg, Jacobs, & Cornwall, 2013; Kennedy & Brancolini, 2012). Addressing some, if not all, of these issues is where the expertise of a research facilitator (RF) comes into play.

At the University Library, University of Saskatchewan, Canada, research facilitation involves an institution-wide network of skilled professionals serving as support for one or more colleges or departments. The University Library RF supports and enhances the research programs and activities of the University Library faculty through a wide range of research support. Such support includes, but is not limited to, assisting with and advising on 1) developing programs of research and research applications for funding, ethical approval, and sabbatical leaves, 2) building faculty research profiles, 3) creating research partnerships, and 4) setting unit specific goals.

After situating librarianship and the research librarians conduct in the Canadian context, this presentation examines the partnership between the RF and the University Library, as well as the partnerships between the RF and librarian faculty members. This presentation also examines the institutional RF framework and institutional supports offered at the University of Saskatchewan. Since the establishment of the RF program, there has been a significant increase in the number of funded librarian research projects. Additionally, more intangible outcomes such as feeling supported, motivated, and accountable have emerged as librarians begin to work with the RF. This presentation is from the perspective of a practicing librarian who has been supported by the RF and of the RF herself. It will explore the expertise the RF brings to the table and the benefits of developing a partnership with an RF. The session will be illustrated

using real life examples from the University of Saskatchewan and will suggest ways to incorporate research facilitation (either formally or informally) at other institutions.

#### References

Berg, S., Jacobs, H.L.M., & Cornall, D. (2013). Academic Librarians and Research: A Study of Canadian Library Administrator Perspectives. *College and Research Libraries*, 74(6), 560-572. DOI: 10.5860/crl12-366

Kennedy, M. R., & Brancolini, K. R. (2012). Academic librarian research: A survey of attitudes, involvement, and perceived capabilities. *College and Research Libraries*, 73(5), 431–448. DOI: 10.5860/crl-276