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ACRL Framework for Impactful Scholarship and Metrics

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Adopted by the ACRL Board of Directors, November 16, 2020

Introduction to the Framework

<u>Task Force Background</u>

The ACRL Impactful Scholarship and Metrics Task Force was formed primarily to create a framework for the measurement and evaluation of academic librarian scholarship. The framework is designed to address gaps between current scholarly evaluation practices and impactful scholarly activities within academic librarianship, including ways to measure and evaluate the impact of a wide range of research outputs.

<u>Framework Categories</u>

This framework outlines two primary impact categories. The first category, "Scholarly Impact," roughly mirrors traditional impact measurements and is informed by citation-based metrics, as well as some other commonly employed metrics, such as acceptance rate. The second category, "Practitioner Impact," describes measurements that reflect the practitioner community of academic librarians and other related professionals/users. These metrics are more qualitative, less traditional, and may be deployed independently or in complement with other evidence of impact to describe a more complete story of librarian scholarship. This framework attempts to describe a wide range of potential avenues for output - that is, ways in which librarians can share their research/scholarship with others. In cases where it was unclear whether an avenue could be considered scholarly in character, the framework aims for inclusion.

<u>Recommended Use</u>

This framework is intended as a tool for academic librarians and their institutions to further understand and contextualize the range and diversity of scholarly activities which may be considered impactful within academic librarianship. Generally speaking, it does not set out to prescribe or recommend specific practices. Accordingly, the framework is best employed as an entryway for discussion at individual institutions within the context of existing guidelines and expectations set forth for academic librarians by those respective institutions. Institutions prioritizing different metrics or areas of scholarly output can adopt areas of the framework that most closely align with institutional values and priorities.

Additionally, it is recommended that institutions consider and discuss, along with this framework, other priorities set forth by ACRL that may complicate the use of the current measurements of scholarship and catalyze the need for change. For example:

- *Open access and open scholarship*. In April 2019, ACRL recommended "as standard practice that academic librarians publish in open access venues."[i]
- *Equity, diversity, and inclusion*. In June 2019, ACRL outlined priorities and plans to reshape the current system of scholarly communications to increase equity and inclusivity.[ii]

While by no means an exhaustive list of the values that institutions should discuss and balance, both of these priorities place value on a scholarly infrastructure that is new, emerging, different, and may not completely align with current evaluative practices. We urge institutions to discuss their core institutional values and priorities, and how support for open access, equity, and inclusion, and impact will be represented by the codified institutional guidelines, expectations, and rank/tenure/promotion/evaluation processes. For example, an institutional commitment to open access may lead to publications in venues with higher acceptance rates than journals ranked as "top" journals in the field. We suggest that institutions consider ways to acknowledge and value these concepts in their evaluative practices.

Along with the institutional discussion, the task force supports the individual framing of metrics - that is, the ability for academic librarians to employ metrics that best tell their impact story. This echoes language found in several institutional guidelines, which leave the documentation and justification of impact up to the individual librarian.

Framework Limitations and Exclusions
It is well acknowledged that metrics are imperfect measures for qualitative values such as excellence, impact, and engagement. This framework assigns metrics to categories, based on currently available resources and technologies, but does not place judgment on their individual use or meaning beyond their value as ways of measuring, describing, and contextualizing these larger concepts.

Neither the research outputs nor suggested measurements are exhaustive, and should not be used to discount other methods of scholarly distribution and measurement employed

successfully by LIS professionals. For example, practical exclusions to the current framework include:

- <u>Grants</u>. Grants do not appear in the framework as either an output or metric because of their innate diversity and inconsistent treatment in the field. Some institutions treat librarian grant applications as independent scholarly outputs, while others consider them secondary measures of scholarly impact.
- <u>Community service</u>. Although some fields consider community service a component of practitioner impact, it is not included in the framework, due to the number of variables at play in its relevant evaluation.
- <u>Journal rankings</u>. While journal rankings are used by some institutions to evaluate the impact of scholarly journal articles, rankings are not listed in the framework due to the problematic nature of this practice, which is well-documented in the literature of multiple academic disciplines. Additionally, we find current institutions rarely use journal rankings to evaluate librarians' scholarly publications.

Librarians may notice other outputs and measures that are not listed in the framework but are used by their institutions to evaluate research output. In such cases, individuals may choose to build on the framework as appropriate to their institutional contexts.

<u>For More Information</u>
For more background on the Task Force's research process, information gathering results and application, draft feedback on this framework, and recommendations for future work, please see https://figshare.com/articles/ACRL_Impactful_Scholarship_and_Metrics_Task_Force_background_results_and_recommendations/11956512 or 10.6084/m9.figshare.11956512.

<u>Impactful Scholarship and Metrics Task Force Members</u>

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[i] "ACRL Policy Statement on Open Access to Scholarship by Academic Librarians," Text, Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), April 1, 2019, http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/openaccess.
[ii] Association of College and Research Libraries. *Open and Equitable Scholarly Communications: Creating a More Inclusive Future*. Prepared by Nancy Maron and Rebecca Kennison with Paul Bracke, Nathan Hall, Isaac Gilman, Kara Malenfant, Charlotte Roh, and Yasmeen Shorish. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2019. https:// doi.org/10.5860/acrl.1.

ACRL Impactful Scholarship and Metrics Framework

Disclaimer: This framework presents an inclusive guide to extant possibilities for the evaluation of academic librarian scholarship. It is not intended to be prescriptive, and does not pre-empt institutional requirements or parameters for librarian documentation, evaluation, or promotion.

Scholarly/Research Output	Potential Scholarly Impact Metrics/Measures	Potential Practitioner Impact Metrics/Measures
Journal article	- Citation count - Journal acceptance rate - Peer-review process - Refereed awards or nominations - Authorship order - Role/contribution - Invited contribution	- Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Direct evidence of use (e.g., email follow-up) - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, training, or other materials
Conference/poster presentation	- Conference scope and/or size - Refereed proposal process - Conference proposal acceptance rate - Attendance - Role/contribution - Invited to present - Refereed awards or nominations	- Presentation evaluations - Views/downloads of video, webinar, or slides - Shares/mentions/comments - Direct evidence of use (e.g., email follow-up) - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, or other materials

Scholarly/Research Output	Potential Scholarly Impact Metrics/Measures	Potential Practitioner Impact Metrics/Measures
Dataset, digital scholarship, digital collections, or other online research	- Citations - Published critical reviews - Refereed awards or nominations - Role/contribution - Invited content or curation	- Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Adaptations or revisions of original work - Attribution in other work - Other reviews - Direct evidence of use (e.g., email follow-up) - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, or other materials
Book (including edited volumes, monographs, textbooks, reference works)	- Publisher's reputation - Published critical reviews - Citations - Refereed awards or nominations - Authorship order - Role/contribution	- Direct evidence of use (e.g., email follow-up) - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, or other materials - Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Other reviews - Library holdings/circulation - Sales
Chapter in an edited volume (including conference proceedings)	- Publisher's reputation, including peer review/referee process - Citations to book chapter or book - Published critical reviews - Refereed awards or nominations - Authorship order - Role/contribution - Invited contribution	- Direct evidence of use (e.g., email follow-up) - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, or other materials - Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Other reviews - Library holdings/circulation - Sales

Scholarly/Research Output	Potential Scholarly Impact Metrics/Measures	Potential Practitioner Impact Metrics/Measures
Journal peer reviewer/editorship	- Journal acceptance rate - Peer-review - Role/responsibilities - Awards or nominations	- Activities (e.g., number of manuscripts reviewed, specific duties) - Consultations or other evidence of direct support (e.g., correspondence prior to manuscript submission)
Advisory board member	- Role/responsibilities - Awards or nominations	- Activities (e.g., specific duties) - Evidence of direct or indirect impact (e.g., changes as a result of advisory work)
Information technology (development of systems, applications, implementations, etc.)	- Reviews - Citations or inclusion/reuse of technology in subsequent research - Role/contribution - Refereed awards or nominations	- Evidence of technology adoption or use - Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Evidence of derivative or dependent projects (e.g. forks) - Invitations to conduct off-site workshops/trainings/consultations
Original professional practice (original cataloging, published metadata, online lesson plans, etc.)	- Reviews - Citations or inclusion/reuse in subsequent research - Role/contribution - Refereed awards or nominations	- Number of contributions - Evidence of use/adoption (e.g. transaction tracking/logfiles) - Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Contribution to cataloging services (e.g. NACO, PCC) - Contribution of authority headings to cataloging records
Published reviews	- Citations - Role/contribution	- Reach of publication - Evidence of adoption or use - Views/downloads

Scholarly/Research Output	Potential Scholarly Impact Metrics/Measures	Potential Practitioner Impact Metrics/Measures
Online contributions (blog editor/author, podcast creator, website maintenance, etc.)	- Citations - Published critical reviews - Role/contribution - Refereed awards or nominations	- Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Other reviews - Other awards or nominations - Adaptations or revisions of original work - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, or other materials
Professional association publications (e.g., authoring/editing ACRL guidelines, etc.)	- Citations - Scope of association - Role/contribution	- Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments - Adaptations or revisions of original work - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, or other materials
Professional association service (committee or task force work, leadership, etc.)	- Scope of association - Role/responsibilities - Refereed awards or nominations	- Professional publications or other available materials - Duties - Other direct evidence of impact, e.g., adoption of any service work (including guidelines, best practices, etc.) by others

Scholarly/Research Output	Potential Scholarly Impact Metrics/Measures	Potential Practitioner Impact Metrics/Measures
Creative works, including exhibitions	- Published critical reviews - Scope of venue / publisher - Invited to present work - Citations - Role/contribution - Refereed awards or nominations	- Adaptations or revisions of original work - Inclusion in practitioner materials, including syllabi, subject guide, or other materials - Attribution in other work - Other reviews - Attendance - Views/downloads - Shares/mentions/comments