ABSTRACT

The objective of this proposal is to further scholarship and practice in the area of scholarly communication by integrating practical experience in the library with the research and classroom experiences that comprise the traditional education of doctoral students.

Libraries lie at the heart of transformations in the scholarly communication environment. Libraries and librarians are consumers, producers, and disseminators of scholarly products. Due to their centrality in this environment and the costs they bear to act in these roles, librarians have been early adopters of changes such as open access. However, although librarians are intimately aware of these changes, scholarly communication is an oft-neglected part of the MLS and doctoral curricula in ALA-accredited programs. This results in future practitioners and faculty members being woefully unaware of the realities of scholarly communication and the role the library plays in this realm.

We seek to recruit a diverse cohort of doctoral students and train them with the practical and theoretical knowledge necessary to become leaders in scholarly communication research and practice. Fellows will be provided with intensive mentoring, wide-ranging opportunities to conduct research in scholarly communication, and comprehensive training in pedagogy, curricular development, and in-class instruction. Our efforts are motivated by an awareness of the complex transformations of library roles in the scholarly communication environment and the increasing need to educate future LIS faculty with an integrated understanding of research and practice so as to meet the needs of future MLS students.

Twelve students (four doctoral, four Master’s, and four undergraduate) will be directly supported through this proposal. The grant will provide funding for two cohorts of two doctoral students, each funded for three years. This will provide sufficient funding for the students to finish their coursework in the doctoral program. Master’s and undergraduate students will have the opportunity to themselves gain practical experience in addressing scholarly communication issues through unique, paid internships in the IU Libraries and Office of Scholarly Publishing. Direct benefits will also be gained by the project team and other supervisors in the department and library who have the opportunity to work with supported Fellows, as well as by those students who have the opportunity of being taught by the Fellows. Extended and sustained benefits are anticipated through the construction of course modules for the MLS curriculum, published research, tutorials, the construction of new tools and practices for academic libraries, and from the cooperation engendered between the library and department.

The project team includes three faculty members from ILS with emphases in scientometrics and doctoral education, knowledge representation and organization, and digital libraries and digital humanities. The team from the library includes the Associate Dean for Collection Development and Scholarly Communications, the Executive Associate Dean of the IU Libraries and Executive Director of the Office for Scholarly Publishing, and the Science Data Management Librarian. These individuals bring the requisite expertise in order to provide high quality training and opportunities for the students who will be supported through this grant.

This is a time of systemic change in how institutions create, sustain, and provide access to information, and libraries and LIS professionals are uniquely situated to influence the direction of this change. This project will educate future leaders who will be uniquely suited to guide the evolution of scholarly communication. The project will graduate doctoral students who are not only familiar with issues of scholarly communication but will also, as leaders in the field, understand scholarly communication from the varying perspectives of practice, education, and research. Finally, while this project will establish a strong relationship between IUB’s Office of Scholarly Publishing and ILS, allowing ILS students to gain practical experience in all manner of scholarly communication issues, it has the opportunity to fundamentally influence the ongoing functions of the OSP, which will provide primary support for all manner of faculty scholarly publishing initiatives and potentially serve as a model for other U.S. institutions of higher learning.