Enjoying the skyline: Providing researchers with a view of impact

Karen E. Gutzman
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Cathy C. Sarli
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Kristi L. Holmes
Northwestern University

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Enjoying the Skyline:
Providing Researchers with a View of Impact

Karen E. Gutzman1 MA, MS; Cathy C. Sarli1 MLS, AHIP; Kristi L. Holmes2 PhD

1Bernard Becker Medical Library, Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO, 63110
2Galter Health Sciences Library, Northwestern University, Chicago, IL, 60611

Problem
Acquiring research funding requires investigators to communicate their research effectiveness to funding agencies.

But...
The process of determining research impact can seem incredibly complex.

What can libraries do?
Libraries can assist in this ambitious and challenging endeavor by identifying research outcomes and outputs to help investigators visualize their own striking research skyline.

Methods
• The Becker Medical Library and the Institute for Clinical and Translational Sciences selected six investigators representing various career stages and areas of research for analysis of research impact.

• A reporting template was developed to document background information and collect publication data from three resources.

• Sample interview questions were also created to allow for in-depth consultation with investigators.

Results
• Library staff completed a reporting template for each investigator. Included in this template is extensive background information including education, areas of research focus, and funding history.

• Publication data were gathered from three major resources and the data were analyzed in several ways, including the creation of temporal, geospatial and topical visualizations.

• Interview questions were developed to allow for in-depth consultation to identify additional indicators of research impact beyond publication data.

Investigator Reporting Template and Interview Questions

Other information includes downloads from Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, and NIH Reporter.

Conclusions
The process of identifying meaningful indicators of research impact is a daunting feat. Impact becomes noticeable as research is built upon and disseminated, and requires ongoing documentation of research outputs and activities. While there are many citation metrics to provide an overview of impact, an in-depth investigation into those numbers, and in other areas of interest, as outlined in the Becker Medical Library Model for Assessment of Research Impact, will greatly benefit the investigator by providing better understanding of how and where their research is making an impact.