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UNIVERSITY OF  
ALBERTA

## **LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

### **Title of Study: Factors Influencing the Research Productivity of Canadian Academic Librarians**

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Ms. Selinda Berg (University of Windsor), Ms. Kristin Hoffmann (University of Western Ontario), and Dr. Denise Koufogiannakis (University of Alberta).

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Ms. Selinda Berg at [sberg@uwindsor.ca](mailto:sberg@uwindsor.ca) or 519-253-3000 ext. 3196; Ms. Kristin Hoffmann at [khoffma8@uwo.ca](mailto:khoffma8@uwo.ca) or 519-661-2111 ext. 84818; or Dr. Denise Koufogiannakis at [dak@ualberta.ca](mailto:dak@ualberta.ca) or (780) 492-5331.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Librarians' ability to succeed in research endeavours is becoming increasingly important. Scholarship, including participation in research and publication, is a professional responsibility for many academic librarians in Canada. Scholarly output is a common requirement for tenure and promotion in Canadian and American academic libraries and therefore is an important component of librarians' career progression. While some librarians have embraced the role of researcher, others have struggled to be productive in this aspect of their responsibilities. There have been many attempts to support librarians in their efforts to be productive researchers; however, currently there is little understanding of what factors have a positive effect on librarians' research success.

The current research study aims to identify the factors that contribute to the success of librarians as active researchers. Research success is generally aligned with productivity and output, and the authors are therefore interested in understanding the factors that encourage research productivity, as well as clarifying how "productivity" has been operationalised for academic librarian researchers.

### **PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey accessible from: <http://fluidsurveys.uwindsor.ca/s/librarianresearchfactors/>. The questionnaire includes questions related to: a.) Education and Professional Experience; b.) Factors Influencing Research Productivity; c.) Demographic Information; d.) Research Outputs. This questionnaire contains both close-ended and open-ended questions and is expected to take less than 20 minutes.

## **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The risk and vulnerability associated with this online survey is low. Participants may feel slightly anxious as they reflect on the research practices and attitudes. To minimize the risks, neither your name nor identifying data will be collected in the survey. **We do not anticipate any professional repercussions from participating in this research.** The data will be analysed only in its aggregated form. Individual responses are not of interest to the researchers. All information will be summarized and no identifying data will be published.

## **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will increase the librarian community's understanding of the current environments in which librarians are researching, as well as guide the community towards supports and structures that will assist librarians in their research endeavours. The study asks you to reflect on your research environment and activities. As such, participation in this study may increase your personal awareness of how personal qualities and the environment in which you work influence your research productivity. In the long term, it is anticipated that the results will guide and inform better structures of support for Canadian academic librarians.

## **COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION**

There is no compensation for your participation in this study.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Although anonymity cannot be ensured due to the relatively small population (approximately 1400 participants) and subsequent possibility of triangulation of data, participants' responses will be kept confidential throughout the duration of the study and through publication. The data are only of interest to the researchers in aggregated form. All data will be analysed in its aggregated form. No identifying information will be published.

The digital data will be stored on a password protected secure network. Only the principal investigator and the co- investigators will have access to the password- protected data. Hard copies of data and notes will be stored in a locked cabinet in the principal investigator's office at the University of Windsor. Data with all potentially identifying data removed will be archived in the University of Alberta's Dataverse.

Representatives of The University of Western Ontario Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the research.

## **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

The survey provides the following options to opt-out during the completion of the study: 1.) to withdraw and exit out of the survey at any point, 2.) to skip questions, or 3.) to submit partially completed surveys. You can choose skip any survey questions or withdraw from the study up until

the point you have submitted your survey. If you choose to withdraw from the study by exiting out, you are reminded to clear the cache history in your browser. Because the data is collected without identifying data, once you have submitted your response you will not be able to withdraw your data. Because of the nature of the analysis, participants must submit their survey on the final page for inclusion in the study. Completion of the survey indicates consent. Incomplete surveys will not be included in analysis.

### **FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS**

Once the study is completed (anticipated date: September 1, 2016) you can view a summary the results of this study on the University of Windsor, Research Ethics Board website, [www.uwindsor.ca/reb](http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb).

### **SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA**

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

### **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: [ethics@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ethics@uwindsor.ca)

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

You do not waive any legal rights by participating in this research.

### **SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATORS**

These are the terms under which we will conduct research.



Berg



Hoffmann



Koufogiannakis

Date: April 4, 2016