

# Information Literacy Group Research Bursaries: notes

**NOTE:** New research priorities in Appendix 1

## Introduction

Research into the effectiveness of IL is published fairly widely. Numerous library journals publish articles on IL in different sectors for example, *Communications in information Literacy*, *Journal of Information Literacy*, *Journal of Librarianship and information Science* and *Journal of Documentation*. However, there are pockets of IL research which have either not taken place at all or have not reached beyond the academic domain. These areas include for example, research in the third sector, various aspects of the workplace, citizenship and so on.

We would like to fill some of those gaps and to do this we are seeking imaginative proposals which have the potential for high impact beyond HE and librarianship. See Appendix 1 for a list of suggested areas of possible research. It should be noted that the principal investigator (the person that leads the research) must be a member of the Information Literacy Group (ILG).

## Research support

The CILIP IL Group is proposing to fund high quality research through an annual bursary scheme. This funding is not designed to replace/ complement existing academic researchers (i.e. those funded to do MAs, MScs or PhDs) but more to support practitioners to gather evidence or conduct action/field research to support well framed research questions.

Methodological strategies can be either qualitative or quantitative or both. Approaches can range from small scale action research to larger scale quantitative studies (or a mixture of the two).

To make sure that your research is well structured we recommend that you include an experienced researcher in your team, or show that there is research support in your institution. This support would need to be clearly outlined in any applications.

The ILG will put out a call for project proposals each year and will cover both desk research (systematic reviews of the literature) and action/field research to cover one of the topics below. ILG members and external reviewers (IL researchers and expert critical friends) will review each application, using the criteria listed below, to ensure that funding is awarded appropriately.

## Funding

A total of up to £20,000 is available for Research Bursaries each year, and applications are now being taken for the 2018 round. The deadline for bids is 5pm BST, Friday 1st June 2018. The bursary might be used, for example, to pay for staff to be released to work on a research project by funding appropriate cover for unpaid leave (2-3 months). Half the funding would be presented at beginning of project and the other half upon successful completion of measurable objectives. Different modes of research may attract different levels of funding for example, a literature review may attract a lower tier of funding (£2,500) and field work could range from £5,000 to a maximum of £10,000.

The successful candidates would be expected to fulfill the following criteria:

* produce a project plan with milestones and simple Gantt chart in accordance with ILG funders' deadlines (this is to reassure the reviewers that you have a realistic idea of how the project will be achieved).
* You should include a stakeholder analysis in your project plan and a risk assessment statement.
* produce a clear plan with SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely) that meet funders' criteria.
* demonstrate how the research will be disseminated (See Appendix 2 for examples of what a well thought out strategy might include)
* Provide an evaluation strategy. This is to ensure that you have thought about how the project is progressing and meeting your aims and objectives
* release any outputs using Creative Commons licences either through CoPILOT, Jorum or another appropriate location (this is to make sure that any outputs can be used by the widest possible audience)

## Criteria

Proposals are more likely to receive funding if they contain the following:

* + A well thought out methodology
  + A clear project plan, objectives and milestones
  + An effective dissemination strategy
  + An evaluation strategy
  + A stakeholder analysis and a risk assessment statement

ILG funders are particularly seeking to fund projects that:

* demonstrate collaboration between sectors
* have tangible, practical benefits (i.e. produces a new process or product with potential application beyond education)
* address current issues affecting areas outside of librarianship (see Appendix1)
* show potential for further large scale study, dissemination and exploitation

# Appendix 1

**Key areas of policy or concern**

These are some of the areas that the ILG have identified as key areas of policy or concern and, therefore, potential areas of research. These are meant as suggestions only and it is not an exhaustive list.

# Topics

Information literacy and:

Mis-information in any form

Social media – especially in relation to negative behaviours

Engaged citizenship including politics (this could build on the work of 3 projects

Social justice

Social inclusion – especially addressing the digital divide

Employability

Transitional states for example from school to college, college to university, university to work, changing career

Information literacy in a specific context (with special reference to the language people use to describe their information engagement):

Everyday life

Workplace/business context (micro-businesses, SMEs, large corporations, social enterprises)

Community

Education

School - any Key Stage

College

Impact in HE with specific reference to the Teaching Excellence Framework

Health

Information literacy and well-being

Information literacy and environmental sustainability

## Potential research questions

Actual research questions, for example, might take the following form:

In what ways can IL assist in the combating of extremism?

In what ways can IL be of benefit to well-being and health?

How do people talk about their information literacy capabilities in a specific workplace (this could be offices, factories, schools or retail outlets)?

Initial research questions need to be open and broad enough within the specific context to provide scope for projects to emerge.

# Appendix 2

**Dissemination strategy ideas**

There are many channels through which a project can be publicised and disseminated. Here are a few of them:

* Publicising the project from the outset e.g., through social media
* publication in a peer reviewed journal
* publication in other journals with general readership e.g., CILIP Update;
* presentation of a paper at least at one relevant conference (for example LILAC or i3)
* engaging with the media and speaking at one event with an audience beyond education

As a condition of the funding it is also expected that you will produce a short (1000 word summary) suitable for publication on the Information Literacy website and / or the Journal of Information Literacy in the project report section.