PIL seeks institutional host for 2020 Visiting Research Scholar Program

Have you ever wished you had a "research therapist" available to you and your colleagues as you work on scholarly research articles or presentations? Whether you are a beginner or an seasoned researcher, wouldn't it be useful to have an expert information literacy researcher -- someone who is not necessarily one of your campus colleagues -- that you could turn to for confidential guidance about study design, research methods, publishing your results, and defining next steps in your research agenda?

Look no further: During the upcoming academic year (January 6, 2020 - June 5, 2020), Project Information Literacy (PIL) (http://projectinfolit.org), the national research institute that has conducted 10 years worth of large-scale OA studies about the information practices and strategies of college students, is delighted to once again offer a unique professional development opportunity to the academic library community. Dr. Alison J. Head, PIL's founder and director, is seeking ONE academic library (community college or four-year institution) in the U.S. where she will be a visiting research scholar. In this role, Alison will mentor library faculty and staff and provide guidance, as needed, for their scholarly research projects, both large and small, throughout the academic year. The deadline to apply for consideration this year is Wednesday, July 10, 2019.

What's offered?

The following hybrid (virtual and in-person) mentoring services will be provided to your academic library over a six-month period:

(1) 15 to 20 "virtual," one-on-one research consultations to individual information literacy researchers (via GHangout or landline) at your institution throughout the academic year.

(2) Four research webinars (virtual) suited for beginning to expert researchers. The webinars will be as follows: (1) introduction to how PIL works and the large-scale studies PIL has conducted, (2) a brown bag session for novice researchers that are just beginning their research careers and conducting (or thinking about conducting) research studies, (3) a case study of a PIL study, selected by librarians/faculty based on their interests in hearing a behind-the-scenes account of the research project, and (4) a session on how to increase your fundraising success for research projects.

(3) One (in-person) campus wide keynote on what we have learned from students about their information seeking practices and research strategies, which draws on PIL's research findings from 11 studies, including our latest study on information literacy in the age of algorithms that will be released mid-December 2019. During this three to four-day visit to your campus, Alison
will have “open office hours” to meet with library faculty and staff to discuss next steps with their research ideas or projects, and other in related fields from across the campus, e.g., the Writing Center and Honors Program.

Cost/fees
For the entire year, PIL, a registered 501(c)(3), will charge your library a one-time fee of $10,000, plus Alison Head's travel costs for a 3 - 4 day campus visit in the spring to provide in-person research consultations and to give a keynote. Your payment to PIL will be a charitable, tax-deductible donation and funds will be used to support PIL’s operating costs and the PIL Fellow Program.

Interested? How do you apply?
If you have the genuine support and interest in this program from your colleagues, and the budgetary approval of your library dean, and would like to be considered as the "host site" for next year’s program with PIL’s Alison Head, please send an email to alison@projectinfolit.org by Wednesday, July 10, 2019. In your email, be sure to tell a little about your library, the research interests and needs you and your colleagues have (and hope to fill), and what you, your colleagues -- and your dean -- are hoping to get from this unique PIL program in professional development. Alison will identify a few finalists, conduct phone interviews to answer any questions about the program, and the final selection for a library site (assuming there’s an interest in this ideal) will occur by August 1, 2019.

What’s the history and purpose of the Visiting Research Scholar Program?
The PIL Visiting Research Scholar Program has successfully occurred on three different campuses since 2016. Institutions selected for the program have been University of Pittsburgh’s University Library Systems (ULS) (2018/2019), Purdue University Libraries (2017/2018), and the University of Nebraska Libraries (2016/2017). The program's sole purpose has been to provide a year of research consultations and mentoring to library faculty and staff so they may become more qualified, improved, and confident information literacy researchers. Associate Dean Scott Brandt has said of Alison work with PUL librarians and campus faculty: “the insights in consultations to researchers has been invaluable and will continue to have impact for years to come.”

Individual research consultations library staff and faculty have been on an array of topics, such as defining a research problem statement, working with geographically dispersed research teams, selecting where to publish research results, choosing the best methodology for collecting data, and tips for developing a focus group script or survey instrument. The mentoring Alison has provided has been predominately virtual, though in-person “open office hours,” during Alison’s visit to a campus, an idea first developed by Purdue Libraries, has drawn lots of consults, too.

Questions?
Contact Alison Head at alison@projectinfolit.org
Posted: June 12, 2019; deadline for applications is July 10, 2019