

# STARTING OUT WITH DISSEMINATION

## 5 STEPS FOR DEPARTMENTS, CENTERS, AND INSTITUTES

Research shows that scholarly outputs with social media engagement are more likely to be cited when compared to similar works<sup>1</sup>. Departments, centers, and institutes can use their online presence to promote their scholars' work by providing a larger platform for that work to be discovered, discussed, and used by many different audiences. By developing a reasonable workflow, departments can easily enhance the dissemination of their scholars' work across several online platforms.

### 1. TRACK SCHOLARLY OUTPUTS.

Track the outputs for your group using alerts or search strategies for specific databases and repositories.

#### Tracking Scholarly Outputs

Scholarly outputs are tracked using an alert based on our scholars' [ORCID](#)s in literature databases (such as [Web of Science](#), [Scopus](#), [PubMed](#), [Dimensions](#)) and using an author name search in the institutional repository (such as [DigitalHub](#)).

Outputs are exported to a spreadsheet (such as [Microsoft Excel](#), [Google Spreadsheet](#), [OpenRefine](#)) every six months for consideration in our department's enhanced dissemination plan.

*Example Dissemination Plan*

[1] Thelwall M, Haustein S, Larivière V, Sugimoto CR (2013) Do Altmetrics Work? Twitter and Ten Other Social Web Services. PLOS ONE 8(5): e64841. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0064841>

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### 2. SET PRIORITIES FOR PROMOTION

Set priorities for choosing scholarly outputs to receive enhanced dissemination. Consider revisiting these priorities on a yearly basis. Ask for input from the entire department when selecting these priorities.

#### Priorities For Promotion

All scholarly outputs published in the previous six months are reviewed (via title and abstract) by a program assistant and tagged using the categories listed below.

Once the full list of outputs is assembled and the tagging is completed, a subject expert from the department will flag up to six outputs for enhanced dissemination during the next six month period.

#### Possible categories for tagging research papers

##### Type of Research (using Figure 1 from [this article](#))

- Primary: basic, clinical, epidemiological
- Secondary: meta analysis, review

##### Outcome of Research:

- Recommendation for intervention or procedure (specify study group)
- Highlights new or improved processes or methodology (specify research topic)
- Tests the reproducibility of a research study
- Discusses education and training (specify student group)

##### Researcher Characteristics:

- Early career (i.e. less than five years of service)
- Research collaboration (i.e. more than one author from our institution)
- Related to specific grant or award

**Institutional Priorities:** Based on the institution's mission, which of the pillars (if any) does this research reflect: education & training, clinical trials, patient care, team science, community-based research

**Document Type:** Use pre-defined list from database or repository (such as [Web of Science](#), [Scopus](#), [PubMed](#), [Dimensions](#))

**Field Normalized Citation Rate:** Number of citations accrued since publication using database-specified counts, normalized for comparison between subject areas (known as the [Category Normalized Citation Impact](#) in InCites, the [Field Weighted Citation Impact](#) in Scopus, the [Relative Citation Ratio](#) with PubMed IDs)

**Altmetric Information:** Number of views, downloads, mentions, saves, bookmarks, recommendations (and so on) across online platforms, which can be found using tools such as: [Altmetric.com](#) or [Plum Analytics](#).

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### 3. USE ONLINE PLATFORMS AND LAY SUMMARIES

Use online platforms such as blogs, newsletters, list-servs, podcasts, website news banners, Twitter, or facebook to highlight outputs over time. Consider how each platform is best used for dissemination.

#### Using Online Platforms for Enhanced Dissemination

Alert the authors that their output was chosen for enhanced dissemination. Ask authors to provide one sentence describing their work and a one to two paragraph [lay summary](#) answering what their research is about, and why it is important (examples are provided by [Kudos](#), [Digital Curation Center](#), [REF Impact Case Studies](#)). Alternately, the program assistant can use the abstract to draft these statements and ask the author to provide edits.

##### Website:

- **Daily.** Highlight faculty publications using an automatic live feed from sources such as [Web of Science](#), [Scopus](#), [PubMed](#), [Dimensions](#)
- **Daily.** Amplify the department's [twitter account](#) by using an automatic live feed onto the website
- **Weekly.** Consider highlighting two faculty members' blogs by adding live feed of posts onto the website
- **Every two months.** Showcase one author every two months; show their ORCID and institutional profiles, highlight top 3 publications, and give lay summary of overall research

##### Twitter:

- **Weekly.** Follow professional twitter accounts of faculty and institution; retweet or like tweets pertaining to relevant research
- **Weekly.** Tweet pre-approved sentence for selected scholarly output with link to online version of the work. Consider using a pre-approved image (see NLM's [Images from History of Medicine](#), CDC's [Public Health Image Library](#), [Wikimedia Commons](#), or [Pixabay](#)), or figure from the output (as copyright allows)
- **Monthly.** Write short tweets about upcoming conferences, meetings, or other events that faculty are attending
- **As needed.** Follow hashtags for conferences; retweet or like tweets pertaining to faculty research
- **As needed.** Set a Google news alert for topics related to the faculty's research. If any large event happens in the media, ask faculty to tweet response based on their research

##### facebook:

- **Weekly.** Post pre-approved lay summary for selected scholarly output with link to online version of the work
- **Yearly.** Post a yearly recap of top events and research from the faculty from the past year

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### 4. CREATE REASONABLE WORKFLOWS

**Good organization and reasonable expectations can make this type of work easier and re-usable for other projects. Consider sharing social media tasks among two or three people. Ask faculty to provide lay summaries or use text written in an abstract. Consider using only one or a few online platforms to optimize any workflows before branching out. Ask your library about generating publications lists for your group.**

#### Reasonable and Re-usable Workflows

Track workflows such as review and acceptance procedures in one place to minimize confusion. Consider a workbook with tabs for each of the areas listed below.

- 1) Description of workflow and general deadlines.
- 2) The most current list of publications under consideration.  
There are several columns for bibliographic information, type of research, outcome of research, etc. as well as a final column that indicates if the output has been selected for enhanced dissemination.
- 3) Tracking upcoming tweets with several columns that include the selected outputs, their corresponding tweets and images, the date for publishing the tweet, and a final column to indicate if the researcher has approved the tweet.
- 4) Tracking upcoming facebook posts, similar to tracking tweets.

Finally, use a free version of a social media management tool to schedule tweets and facebook posts (such as [Sprout Social](#), [HootSuite](#), or [Kudos](#)) for our department's accounts.

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### 5. EVALUATE THE DISSEMINATION PLAN

It can be difficult to know how effective your efforts at promoting your scholars' work have been if you don't have an end game. As with any evaluation, your objectives should be specific, measurable, and attainable.

#### Evaluating the Dissemination Plan

Each year we hope to increase our online presence by gaining new followers, providing interesting posts, and engaging audiences in our scholars' work.

- **Activity.** We hope to keep our social media channels active and our content fresh so that our followers are interested and engaged. To accomplish this, we will post up to 6 lay summaries of our research on our website, Twitter, and facebook each year. We will also provide up to 24 tweets or facebook posts overall on various topics each year.
- **Followers.** We want to increase our number of followers so that we raise visibility on anything we promote via our social channels. We will track the number of followers on our twitter and facebook profiles and hope to increase our number of followers by 10 to 20 people each year.
- **Attention.** We will track the Altmetric Score of the works before our promotion and 6 months after promotion. Our hope is to see an increase of their [Altmetric Score](#) by 2 to 3 points, which indicates additional attention to the scholars' work.
- **Traffic.** We hope to highlight the work of one scholar on our website in two month intervals. We will track the web traffic during those two months to identify any increase in traffic from various places over time.
- **Views.** We hope to drive traffic to our institutional repository which provides open access to our scholars' work. We will monitor the number of views before our promotion and 6 months after promotion. Our hope is to see an increase in views of their work by 20% because of our efforts.

We will use the analytical features of our social media management tool to maximize our online presence and better direct our overall efforts.

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### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

**Use your institutional resources.** Reach out to your institutional contacts, usually through the Office of Communications, who can help you develop a strong dissemination plan, or who can use the institution's online platforms to highlight scholarly outputs.

**Ahead of publication.** Consider developing a workflow to identify scholarly outputs before they are published online so that you can add some early hype about their upcoming presence.

**Audiences to consider.** There are many audiences that online platforms appeal to, including: academic faculty and staff, students (all levels and ages), researchers, clinical practitioners, patients, caregivers, advocacy groups, and more. Consider whether you've provided avenues for these audiences to come into contact with your scholarly outputs online.

**Use an institutional repository.** Institutional repositories are an excellent option for sharing scholarly outputs online, especially non-traditional outputs, such as datasets, educational materials, protocols, and more. A repository will provide a DOI and a citation for each of the outputs, as well as a long term home for your work.

**Be prepared for all types of engagement.** The online environment allows for engagement of all types, both positive and negative. While spirited dissent is understandable, there are those who are motivated by extreme negativity. Consider talking with your Office of Communications on how to deal with anything that may arise from having a more notable presence in online platforms.

**Take a deep dive into dissemination planning.** This guide is only the beginning of what can become a much more in depth and contextualized dissemination plan. Consider the [Dissemination Planning Tool](#) by AHRQ, or the [Dissemination and implementation Framework and Toolkit](#) by PCORI.