Evidence Based Library and Information Practice

Evidence Based Library and Information Practice Adopts Author Contributions Statements

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Since its founding in 2006, *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* (*EBLIP*) has valued the contributions of authors who advance evidence based practice in the field of library and information science. To better recognize the important scholarly work of our authors, *EBLIP's* Editorial Board believes that author contributions should be more clearly described in co-authored publications. Beginning with the March 2021 issue, Author Contributions statements will be included with each co-authored research article, review article, or using evidence in practice article.

Because authorship is the result of considerable effort and intellectual activity, authors deserve to be recognized for their unique contributions to scholarship. But while it is common to think of an author as being synonymous with a writer, authorship of scholarly works typically includes many more tasks than writing. In addition, authorship of scholarly works comes with responsibilities. Authors must ensure that their works are truthful and have been produced in a manner that is consistent with ethical standards. They are to be held accountable if questions arise as to the integrity of their assertions.

Because of the complexity of authoring scholarly works, collaborations are increasingly common. When collaboration occurs, authors frequently contribute to a work in different ways and in different amounts in accordance with the strengths they bring to the endeavor. This, after all, is the nature of collaboration. The production of scholarship often involves the execution of several different complex tasks that occur over months and years, including research design, data collection, and data analysis, as well as writing and editing, just to name a few. Authors often take different roles in executing these tasks, which come with different expectations. At times, collaboration can be challenging, but it often enables the execution of more complex research projects which contribute to evidence based practice.

Because of the demanding nature of scholarship, authors' distinct contributions deserve recognition. At many libraries and related institutions, authorship of scholarly works is an expectation of employment, and authors may need to demonstrate the contributions they make. However, a simple author list lacks transparency about these contributions. It is often difficult for a reader to know an individual author's contributions by looking at the list of authors beneath an article title. In addition, *EBLIP* does not designate corresponding authors in publications and instead publishes email contact information for all authors in order to facilitate conversations among scholars. Scholarly communications may be enhanced through greater transparency about author roles. For these reasons, *EBLIP* will now be implementing Author Contributions statements.

To provide a framework for our implementation, *EBLIP* has adopted the Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT) from CASRAI. The Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information (CASRAI) is an international non-profit initiative, founded in Canada, with membership comprised of research institutions and their partners. CASRAI's goal is to build networks among stakeholders in the research life cycle and publish guidelines to help funders, vendors, and research institutions improve consistency, utility, and comparability in data collected from researchers (https://casrai.org/about/).

CRediT is one of the resources provided by CASRAI to further this goal of data consistency; though CRediT is currently managed as an informal standard, a push is underway for formal standardization at the National Information Standards Organization (NISO). The taxonomy describes 14 roles commonly filled by scholarly contributors, ranging from Conceptualization (formulating the research aims) and Methodology (development or design of methods, creation of models) to Validation (verification of overall reproducibility) and Writing. Each contributor can occupy one or multiple roles, and each role can be assigned to one or multiple contributors. Optional modifiers can be added to a role to indicate a contributor's degree of contribution: equal, lead, or supporting. Roles are listed in full and defined at https://casrai.org/credit/.

EBLIP has chosen to adopt CRediT, as opposed to a set of customized roles or definitions, in order to maintain consistency across scholarly publishing for a global readership and authorship. Since 2014, CRediT has been adopted by *PLOS One*, Cell Press, MIT Press, Oxford University Press, Duke University Press, Elsevier, F1000 Research, Wolters Kluwer, Springer, SAGE Publishing, and many other publishers and partners/vendors. The taxonomy has also been integrated and made machine-readable in various submission systems, such as Aries' Editorial Manager and River Valley's ReView. In the likely event that the Open Journals System (OJS) also integrates support for CRediT, *EBLIP* will be well served by adoption of this standard as compared to any customized approach.

The *EBLIP* implementation of CRediT will involve an Author Contributions statement at the end of the article text before the References;

the statement will be formatted with each author name appearing in bold, followed by a list of the appropriate contributor roles, as illustrated in the following examples:

Example 1

Zhang Lee: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software **Aditi Singh:** Data curation, Writing - original draft **Neeru Acharya:** Visualization, Investigation **Noel Jenson:** Supervision **Vijay Kumar:** Software, Validation **Caryn Dillon:** Writing - review & editing

Example 2 (illustrating optional degrees of contribution)

Pierro Correia: Writing - review & editing (equal) **Anna Berkowitz:** Conceptualization (lead), Writing - original draft (lead), Formal analysis (lead), Writing - review & editing (equal) **Yolanda Roberto:** Software (lead), Writing - review & editing (equal) **Takaaki Yamada:** Methodology (lead), Writing - review & editing (equal) **Qian Wu:** Conceptualization (supporting), Writing - original draft (supporting), Writing - review & editing (equal)

Authors will be asked to provide this Author Contributions statement after a co-authored research article, review article, or using evidence in practice article has been accepted for publication in *EBLIP*; single-author articles will not require an Author Contributions statement. All relevant contributions should be included, even if a specific contributor is not included in the authorship byline (for example, someone named in Acknowledgements could also be included in Contributions). In developing the Author Contributions statement, it is essential

that all contributors share responsibility for assigning, reviewing, and confirming roles and degrees of contribution. This is necessary to honor the transparency of the research and authorship process, and reaching consensus on contributions prior to publication will reduce the potential for post-publication author disputes or the misuse of coauthored works, in terms of an individual contributor taking credit for more than their share in the work. The more that the scholarly publishing ecosystem moves to clarify contributions in a transparent and standardized manner, the more we will drive the visibility and recognition of the diverse skills and experiences that individual researchers bring to the table.

Since its founding as an open access journal in 2006, *EBLIP* has served as an open forum for the sharing of evidence based practices across all library sectors and borders to support the greater exchange of knowledge. *EBLIP* has instituted several practices that support this philosophy of openness. In addition to making all articles freely available, *EBLIP* also promotes open data—that is, the sharing of data supporting research published in the journal. To support the discoverability of authors' works, *EBLIP* includes digital object identifiers for all articles and is now including ORCID numbers for authors in order to improve discoverability. The inclusion of ORCID numbers helps to ensure that authors' works are correctly and consistently identified across their body of scholarship. *EBLIP's* Editorial Board believes that the inclusion of Author Contributions statements is a logical and important extension of the journal's commitment to openness and transparency in all areas of its practice.