

University of St. Thomas, Minnesota

UST Research Online

Library Staff Publications & Presentations

Libraries

2020

Finding Expertise in Your Own Backyard: Creating Communities of Practice to Support Learning about the Framework

Kim Pittman

University of Minnesota - Duluth

Amy Mars

St. Catherine University

Trent Brager

University of St. Thomas, Minnesota

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.stthomas.edu/lib_staffpub



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

This Book Chapter is brought to you for free and open access by the Libraries at UST Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Staff Publications & Presentations by an authorized administrator of UST Research Online. For more information, please contact asle4660@stthomas.edu.

Finding expertise in your own backyard: Creating communities of practice to support learning about the Framework

By Kim Pittman, Amy Mars, and Trent Brager

This chapter will focus on successful strategies for creating ongoing professional development opportunities and building communities of practice around the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*.¹ Drawing on the authors' experiences developing free and low-cost opportunities for *Framework*-related professional development as former co-chairs of the Minnesota Library Association Instruction Roundtable (IRT), our case study will demonstrate that many barriers to *Framework*-related professional development can be overcome by leveraging expertise from communities of practice and taking a user-centered approach to design. Using the 23 Framework Things² program and interviews with program participants, we will highlight how the design and content of *Framework*-related professional development can draw on the learning theories that inform the *Framework* itself, be accessible to a wide range of audiences and local contexts by employing a flexible structure and provide a forum for librarians engaging in collaborative learning.

Problem/Context

In the years since ACRL's initial rollout of the *Framework* in 2015, librarians nationwide have identified challenges and called for more support in implementing the *Framework*. Following ACRL's rescinding of the *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*³ and formal adoption of the *Framework* in January 2016, a small number of studies have explored the extent to which instruction librarians have incorporated the new document into their teaching practice. Charles conducted a survey of New Jersey academic librarians before the *Standards* were rescinded, asking participants to report on their institution's progress in

implementing the *Framework*. While 28% of respondents were “waiting for more examples from ACRL regarding how to integrate the *Framework*,” 50% of respondents were beginning to implement the *Framework* with library colleagues and 22% were working with faculty to apply the *Framework*.⁴ In a 2016 survey of instruction librarians in the United States conducted by Julien, Gross, and Latham, 41% of respondents indicated that the *Framework* “had no influence or only a minor influence” on their approach to instruction, while 31% reported a “significant influence.”⁵ Schulte and Knapp’s 2016 survey of health sciences librarians indicated a low rate of adoption among teaching librarians within their disciplines: 11% had incorporated the *Framework* into their teaching practice, while 45% anticipated implementing it in the near future. A majority of participants, 54%, had not implemented the *Framework* and did not expect to do so.⁶ Guth and Sachs completed a 2015 survey exploring rates of *Framework* adoption among business librarians, comparing those rates to a similar study conducted shortly after the creation of the *Standards*. This study revealed that nine months after ACRL filed the *Framework*, 39% of business librarians “had incorporated or were in the process of incorporating the *Framework* into instruction.”⁷ While these studies provide an incomplete picture of *Framework* adoption and implementation, they do highlight the challenging nature of the transition from *Standards* to *Framework*.

The literature also reveals common barriers librarians encounter when engaging with the *Framework*. In 2017, Latham, Gross, and Julien conducted semi-structured interviews with fifteen librarians about their experiences with the *Framework*.⁸ Participants identified time; resistance from other librarians, faculty, and administration; and aligning assessment methods to *Framework* concepts as significant challenges in implementing the *Framework*. The authors extrapolate on the same study in a separate article, highlighting underlying sources of resistance

to the *Framework*, including the workload involved in adoption as well as “concerns about it being too conceptual, elitist, and not appropriate for every audience.”⁹ Interviewees also expressed a sense of isolation, describing a lack of awareness of how the *Framework* is being implemented by colleagues and frustration caused by colleagues’ unwillingness to discuss or apply the *Framework* collaboratively. Additionally, participants discussed the challenges involved in building the collaborative relationships with faculty that are necessary to make information literacy a campus-wide priority.

As co-chairs of the Minnesota Library Association Instruction Roundtable (IRT), we saw these same struggles and calls for support mirrored at the local level among both teaching librarians and directors. IRT is a statewide forum for Minnesota instruction librarians to share ideas, resources, and best practices. With approximately ninety-seven members statewide, IRT supports librarians who teach by holding workshops, social events, and annual business meetings. In October 2016, the IRT co-chairs were invited to offer a workshop about the *Framework* at the Council of Academic Library Directors (CALD), an annual gathering of Minnesota’s academic library directors. In addition to providing an overview of the *Framework’s* structure and purpose, as well as sharing examples of the *Framework* in practice, we facilitated small group discussions about each institution’s progress toward implementing the *Framework*. Concerns expressed in these conversations echoed many of the challenges described in the literature, including limited time and capacity for librarians to work with and learn about the *Framework*, lack of support from faculty, librarian resistance to change, concerns about meeting accreditation requirements, and the challenges of shifting to a conceptual and flexible approach from the more concrete nature of the *Standards*.

Communicating with instruction librarians from around the state further amplified the

need for support. Just prior to the CALD workshop, we held our annual IRT business meeting at the 2016 Minnesota Library Association Conference. In this meeting, our members identified learning to implement the *Framework* as a top priority for IRT-sponsored professional development in the 2016-17 academic year. Members articulated specific concerns about the language of the document and challenges of using it to inform student learning assessment efforts. Discussing these obstacles with teaching librarians and directors motivated us to take action and create additional resources and professional development opportunities for teaching librarians within our state. At this meeting, we also elected a new IRT co-chair who collaborated with the two previous co-chairs on all subsequent *Framework*-related professional development projects.

Following the CALD workshop and IRT business meeting, we began to discuss how we could best respond to this clearly expressed need. Our initial impulse was to bring in a nationally-known expert to guide our state's teaching librarians. While this would have been a simple solution, we were dissuaded both by the potential cost and by our belief that teaching librarians in Minnesota were already engaging with the *Framework* in effective ways. We opted to draw on the expertise of librarians in our community rather than outside speakers, an approach that made professional development more affordable and accessible for the local community. Our strategy of highlighting regional expertise also aligned with the *Framework's* emphasis on local context for implementation. As a first step toward supporting Minnesota librarians in implementing the *Framework*, we partnered with librarians from a variety of academic libraries in Minnesota to create a half-day workshop called "Let's Build Together: Minnesota Librarians Implementing the ACRL Information Literacy Framework." In this workshop, librarians from a variety of academic institutions each presented on an aspect of the *Framework* with which they

had expertise. Presenters covered a wide range of topics including creating an information literacy road map at your institution, writing lesson plans and student learning outcomes, performing outreach to faculty, assessing affective components of learning, and using rubrics with the *Framework*. The workshop demonstrated that each librarian was drawing from a unique context and that by coming together to share, we were able to address many of the commonly identified barriers to engaging with the *Framework* without a significant investment of money or time.

In addition to the workshop, we knew that we needed to support deeper learning by providing additional opportunities for long-term engagement with the *Framework*. Because time had emerged as a key barrier to *Framework* implementation, we wanted to create a flexible, self-paced professional development resource that would be accessible regardless of location, financial means, or previous experience with the *Framework*. With these considerations in mind, we decided to adapt the 23 Things model of professional development, first developed by Helene Blowers to help Charlotte Mecklenburg Library staff members learn about web 2.0.¹⁰ By providing twenty-three prompts that invite participants to explore a broad topic in an online environment and offering incentives for participation, this model encourages ongoing collaborative learning. The 23 Things model has been used for a variety of audiences and purposes, including a program coordinated by Metronet, a multitype library network in Minnesota, called 23 Mobile Things, which challenged participants to complete twenty-three online activities related to mobile technology.¹¹ One IRT co-chair had previously participated in this program, and this prior experience with the 23 Things model inspired us to apply it to learning about the *Framework*.

Solution

The structure and content of 23 Framework Things was developed based on the theories that inform the *Framework*, themes from the literature, and our experiences delivering *Framework*-related in-person professional development. The feedback we gleaned from our local community and patterns from the literature enabled us to take a user-centered approach to designing 23 Framework Things. At the outset, we focused our energy on designing a program to alleviate frequently cited barriers and address “stuck places” commonly experienced by newcomers to the *Framework*. As we began to promote the program on listservs, librarians from beyond Minnesota asked if it could be made available outside the state. Based on this interest, we opened participation to any interested person regardless of location.

Each of the 23 Things addresses a different aspect of the *Framework*, including metacognition, social justice, pedagogy, outreach/marketing, and assessment, among others. Each Thing includes *Framework*-related resources such as readings, videos, or examples of the *Framework* in practice. Participants are asked to respond to the resources provided by writing a reflection or discussion post, creating or adapting a lesson plan, or identifying stakeholders or partners to apply what they have learned to their specific teaching role and/or institutional context. In addition to communicating via comments, the program also makes use of Flipgrid¹², a free online tool that allows participants to post video responses. To add structure and cohesiveness to the program, we organized topics into four tracks: Assessment, At Your Institution, Frame Focus, and Pedagogy. Each of these tracks includes prompts designed to help librarians overcome common barriers to *Framework* implementation.

Theory and Practice

In the introduction to the *Framework* and supporting literature, metaliteracy, threshold concepts, and Understanding by Design are referenced as having significantly informed the

Framework's design and the approach to information literacy it advocates.¹³ These three concepts represent some of the areas where the *Framework* is a significant departure from the *Standards*. Because of this, we incorporated these conceptual understandings into not only the content, but the design of 23 Framework Things. As we were selecting topics to include among the 23 Things, we reflected on our own “threshold moments” when we were learning about the *Framework*. Meyer and Land define threshold concepts as

akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. It represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress. As a consequence of comprehending a threshold concept there may be a transformed internal view of subject matter, subject landscape, or even worldview.¹⁴

We narrowed our long list of potential Things by focusing on obstacles to understanding and concepts that aligned with our own experience and the literature (Thing #2: Threshold Concepts, Thing #13: Understanding by Design, Thing #19: Metacognition, Thing #23: Assessing Dispositions, the Frame Focus track, etc.). Though we may not have been fully aware of it at the time, by focusing the conceptual understandings that we wanted participants to walk away with after participating in 23 Framework Things, we were employing a model akin to Wiggins and McTighe’s “backward design” approach.¹⁵

The *Framework*, influenced heavily by Mackey and Jacobson’s research on metaliteracy, also emphasizes metacognition and affective learning.¹⁶ For this reason, we designed our prompts to include opportunities for participants to reflect on their feelings about and experiences with the *Framework* and *Standards*. As one participant noted,¹⁷

The Things were great because they made me dig deep into my own thinking and reflect upon why I was responding in this way or that way about a Frame or something in relation to one of the Frames. Basically, 23 Framework Things was a massive exercise in metacognition for those of us who need to help our students understand their own metacognitive processes.¹⁸

By designing each Thing with a reading to promote deep thinking and a prompt (discussion post, activity, reflection, etc.) to encourage application of theories and big concepts, participants experienced multiple metacognitive moments, making their learning visible and facilitating greater engagement with the *Framework*. As one participant reported, “Reading one to three theoretical articles helped to put the topic in context and then creating and or discussing practical applications of the theory and the *Framework* helped to make the topic practical and useful.”¹⁹

This mixture of theory and practical application challenged participants to negotiate between their understanding and the specific and varied contexts in which they were working. Highlighting the *Framework*'s emphasis on local context for implementation, participants were consistently invited to consider institutional factors when developing strategies for instructional design, assessment, or outreach to faculty. Additionally, the “choose your own adventure” structure acknowledged that different readings and activities will be a better match for participants in different contexts and situations.

Responding to barriers

We were aware that librarians had experienced barriers to engaging with the *Framework*, thus we felt it was important to address as many of these as we could during the 23 Framework Things design process. In the literature and through our previous *Framework*-related professional development experience, we found that many librarians describe using the *Framework* to

develop assessment strategies as a struggle. With this in mind, we created an assessment track to give participants tools and a forum to tackle a variety of assessment challenges including Thing #11: Writing Student Learning Outcomes, Thing #17: Curriculum Mapping, Thing #20: Rubric-Based Assessment, and Thing #23: Assessing Dispositions. Things from the Assessment track were frequently identified by participants as important to their learning. As one participant put it, “I’m rubbish at writing SLOs, so it was great practice.”²⁰ Another participant described the value of learning to assess the affective dimension of learning: “Thing #23 not only gives a rationale for assessing affective outcomes, but some ideas for how to do so. How can we engage with our students, if we ignore their feelings?”²¹

Things were also created to respond to questions about collaborating with faculty and applying the *Framework* to specific institutional contexts. Communicating about the *Framework* to faculty was addressed in Thing #12: Collaborating with Faculty, Thing #15: Collaborating with Writing Programs, and Thing #16: Discipline-Specific Instruction. Knowing that participants were coming from a variety of institutions where they held a range of roles, we created an At Your Institution track and designed prompts such as Thing #14: One-Shots & IL Courses with multiple entry points and opportunities for participants to apply their learning to their own institution. Participants indicated that this emphasis on local adaptation helped them grasp the flexibility of the *Framework*. One reported, “The early discussions about the *Framework* often mentioned how it was adaptable to local needs. Between the readings and my fellow participants’ posts, 23 Framework Things proved that point repeatedly and in a concrete way.”²²

Another common barrier to implementing the *Framework* is the theoretical nature of the document and the ways in which it is a departure from the *Standards*. To help participants

engage with the theoretical foundations of the *Framework*, we included a Pedagogy track that addressed the Understanding by Design approach to instructional design (Thing #13), metacognition (Thing #19), and threshold concepts (Thing #2). For Thing #1, we selected Foasberg's article outlining the way that the *Framework* responds to critiques of the *Standards* and the pedagogical implications of new understandings of information literacy.²³ Comments and feedback to 23 Framework Things and in-person workshops and trainings reveal that the theoretical underpinnings are not always clear to newcomers to the *Framework* and participating in Thing #1 was a "threshold moment" for many.

While many Things addressed the learning theories that inform the *Framework*, we also intentionally included prompts that encouraged participants to take concrete steps to apply the *Framework* to their teaching practice. For example, Things from the Frame Focus track invited participants to design or adapt a lesson plan for each Frame and share it via the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy Sandbox²⁴ or Project CORA.²⁵ Participants indicated that these Things served as a starting point for applying the *Framework* at an individual level. For example, one stated, "Even if I personally can't create change at an institutional level, my engagement with students can be refreshed and renewed by looking at instruction in all its forms (at the desk, online, in the classroom, etc.) through a new lens."²⁶

Time is another frequently mentioned barrier to engaging with the *Framework*. Many librarians expressed that it was challenging to learn a new approach to teaching information literacy while juggling busy teaching loads and other job responsibilities. By leveraging the 23 Things' "choose your own adventure" model, we were able to meet participants where they were both in terms of knowledge and experience with the *Framework* and in regard to the amount of time they could dedicate to exploring the *Framework's* various nuances. In interviews with

participants, we heard that part of what made 23 Framework Things so accessible was that it was broken into manageable chunks and allowed for divide and conquer approaches to content. This structure allowed for multiple paths to learning (chronological, track-based, ad hoc, institutionally-specific, interest-based, etc.) and enabled both seasoned instruction librarians and newly-credentialed librarians to enhance their understanding and improve their teaching practice. Many participants indicated that because the content of 23 Framework Things was broken into chunks, it was easier to incorporate learning about the *Framework* into their regular work schedules. One participant suggested that the program helped her take more time for learning and reflection than she would typically allow herself: “I had to give myself permission to just sit and think, process things, and then write about it. I don’t always take that time or have the vehicle to do that. This gave me that time and a reason for doing it.”²⁷ By encouraging participants to complete the Things at their own pace, the program supports long-term engagement with the *Framework*, resulting in the deeper learning called for by the *Framework*.

This flexible structure also facilitated group participation and many participants chose to approach the content collaboratively. Some participants paired up with a colleague at their institution and compared notes, while others chose to formally adopt parts of 23 Framework Things as a departmental professional development tool or assignment. Affinity groups could also complete the program together. For example, the Literatures in English section of the Association of College and Research Libraries invited us to present a webinar to their members followed by Twitter chats centered around *Framework* topics relevant to their group’s context and focus. By incorporating flexibility into the design, users were able to make use of 23 Framework Things in unexpected ways that fit their context and needs.

Engagement

There are a plethora of free online professional development options available to librarians. To ensure that 23 Framework Things attracted participants and sustained participation, we developed a visually appealing platform and used several strategies for engagement including game-based incentives like prizes and leaderboards, formative assessment to improve the user experience, and email reminders that highlighted certain things and brought 23 Framework Things back to the forefront of participants' attention.

Reflecting the *Framework's* emphasis on research as “an ongoing conversation in which information users and creators come together and negotiate meaning,”²⁸ we selected WordPress.com as the platform where users can communicate with each other, share ideas, and ask questions via comments. We also selected Wordpress.com as our website content management system due to previous experience with the platform and the availability of free, attractive layout templates. Knowing that each of the 23 Things could be selected by participants to complete in any order, we chose a template that allowed each Thing to be selected from the homepage. Each Thing was represented by a custom clickable image that displayed the number of the Thing and a background representing which track the Thing is a member of (see figure 1).<figure 1 near here> We intentionally created a visual layout with engaging graphics that would make the site approachable and intuitive by making each Thing easily accessible instead of using complex site navigation.

To motivate participants, we offered incentives for participation and completing portions of the program based on a tiered system. Participants who completed a track were sent a button that we designed based on the name of the track. For example, completing the Pedagogy track awarded the participant a button with an image of whiteboard markers and the text “pedagogy:

teaching is learning” (see figure 2).<figure 2 near here> These buttons were made in bulk using a button maker machine at one of our libraries, then sent out with a letter confirming track completion. A button and certificate were sent for every track completed. Completing tracks also entered participants into drawings for prizes. The more tracks completed, the more drawings were entered and the prizes for each successive track were more valuable. Though most participants were more motivated by learning about the *Framework*, these external motivators served as a reward for those engaged in the program, according to interviews and surveys.

To incentivize participants to complete more Things and add an element of gamification, a leaderboard was created to show the progress of participants who opted to have their name included the list (see figure 3).<figure 3 near here> As a participant completed more Things, their name rose up the leaderboard. This was a small incentive that built on people’s sense of competition to encourage progress through the program. Participants took different forms of inspiration from the leaderboard. As one participant put it, “Though I don’t consider myself a competitive person, I want to grow as a professional--compete against myself, you could say: The leaderboard helped me track my progress.”²⁹ In contrast, a participant in a mid-program survey commented that the incentives brought out their competitive side, motivating them to finish the program. We maintained the leaderboard and offered prizes, buttons, and other incentives to participate from April 2017 to August 2018. Though we are no longer offering prizes or updating participants’ progress, 23 Framework Things remains open and accessible to those who still find the resources and forum to be a useful tool for engaging with the *Framework*.

While much of our engagement was based on fun and lightheartedness to encourage participation, we also conducted a feedback survey of participants midway through the program. This provided us with insight into what held participants back from progressing further into the

program and what we could do to make the program more manageable. The feedback told us that some of the Things were too text-heavy and required too much work to complete. Participants also requested open access readings whenever possible and suggested that reminder emails would be useful to encourage progress. The survey results prompted us to streamline each Thing for length and clarity and to make participant email reminders a regular part of our work on the program. We also made changes to the program based on our observation of participants' written responses to Things. Participant comments were often much more substantial and in-depth than we expected, making it difficult for participants to complete all 23 Things within our original timeframe. This was confirmed by survey participants who requested more time to complete the program. In response to this feedback, we extended the timeframe in which participants could earn incentives by several months.

Sustaining participant engagement in 23 Framework Things was an ongoing process that took several forms. As a subunit of the Minnesota Library Association (MLA), we worked with the MLA to post announcements and information about 23 Framework Things on their social media outlets. To encourage continued participation beyond Minnesota, we sent regular emails to the ILI-L and ACRLFrame listservs. Further use of the program was prompted by emails we sent to all participants every month or two. With these emails, we reminded participants about the program and featured a few of the Things and how they could be useful to their practice. Messages were lighthearted in tone and the 23 Framework Things logo was often modified to fit the theme of that month's message (see figure 4).<figure 4 near here>

Collaborations and Communities of Practice

Our collaboration was key to the success of 23 Framework Things. Given the project's scale, it would not have been possible to complete the work involved without shared effort and a

sense of accountability to each other that motivated us to stay on track. Beyond distributing the workload, our different backgrounds, areas of expertise, and work experience informed the development of the Things and ensured that the site was relevant for a range of users with a variety of needs and contexts. The collaborative process of creating the site made the three of us more aware of the significant role that community plays in responding to a professional change on the scale of the *Framework*. Our experience of building community with each other through the process of developing the program led us to the realization that 23 Framework Things had the potential to serve as a *Framework*-focused community of practice. Wenger defines communities of practice (CoPs) as “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.”³⁰ Lave and Wenger developed the concept of CoPs to illustrate the ways in which learning is “situated” as part of a social, community-based process, not an individual act.³¹

The nature of communities of practice makes them an effective tool for engaging in ongoing learning about the *Framework*. Nichols Hess argues that adult learning theory provides guidance for anyone interested in designing *Framework*-related professional development.³² Drawing on transformative learning theory, she identifies the *Framework* as a “disorienting dilemma” for many librarians, and describes the phases of learning librarians may need to progress through in order to “transform [their] habits of mind and frames of reference.”³³ In order to support librarians who are navigating this transformational process, Nichols Hess suggests that “providing collaborative environments where academic librarians can learn from each other may help them to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills required to embody a new instructional role, develop a plan to enact change in their teaching practices, or determine how to renegotiate or build relationships around their new understandings of information literacy

instruction.”³⁴ Based on social learning theory, Nichols Hess suggests that librarians may benefit from working through the process of change collaboratively.³⁵ As a virtual CoP, 23 Framework Things offers a community structure to support the kind of social learning that Nichols Hess describes.

Communities of practice can also enable librarians to address many of the challenges of *Framework* implementation we have encountered in the literature and in our own experience. Through shared effort and expertise, CoPs may reduce the time commitment required for learning about the *Framework*. Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) note that communities of practice help participants to “be more daring in taking risks or trying new things, knowing they have a community to back them up.”³⁶ This sense of security may alleviate the trepidation and disorientation Nichols Hess suggests that librarians may experience while learning to implement the *Framework*. CoP participants can also focus their collaborative efforts on common obstacles to understanding or implementing the *Framework*, including its theoretical nature and emphasis on conceptual understandings, the challenge of incorporating *Framework* concepts into one-shot sessions, and the complexities of developing collaborative relationships with faculty.

23 Framework Things participants highlighted ways in which the community structure of the program impacted their learning. One participant described the program as “a little bit like journaling with a discussion board. I really appreciated learning from other people. I would use this structure again for other topics as well. It was a wonderful way to bring people together.”³⁷ In addition to benefiting from the built-in community of 23 Framework Things, participants also described instances in which they shared 23 Framework Things content within existing communities of practice. One participant recommended a reading from Thing #23: Assessing

Dispositions for a staff retreat, generating productive conversation and progress toward writing affective outcomes.³⁸ The Research & Learning Services department of one library participated in 23 Framework Things as a group, dividing Things up among team members and sharing what they learned in a series of meetings held throughout the summer and fall of 2018. In an interview, the department head expressed, “Being able to talk as a group is nice versus doing it alone. If multiple of us had done it individually, we still would’ve tried to come together and have some conversations as a group. There’s value in that and we have a practice of doing that.”³⁹

In the process of creating and promoting the program, IRT co-chairs collaborated with many partners. Thing #22 was guest-written by Heather Collins, Joelle Pitts, and Matt Upson of the ACRL Instruction Section Innovation Award-winning New Literacies Alliance.⁴⁰ For Things #19 and #23, many experts from the library community, including Framework Task Force member and co-editor of the book *Metaliteracy in Practice*⁴¹, Trudi Jacobson; ACRL Framework workshop⁴² co-designer and presenter Lindsay Matts-Benson; and Assessment in Action⁴³ project leaders Kim Pittman and Ken Liss, contributed short videos on metacognition and assessing dispositions. To promote the program more broadly and provide incentives for participation, IRT co-chairs partnered with regional groups including the Minnesota Library Association, Minitex, the Minnesota Council of Academic Library Directors, and Metronet.

Assessment

In order to improve the program and evaluate its impact, we tracked usage statistics, delivered user surveys, and interviewed participants. At the time of writing, the 23 Framework Things website has received 50,714 views, 12,387 visitors, and 544 comments. There were 435 registered participants from forty-two U.S. states plus Washington DC and Puerto Rico.

Librarians from eleven countries outside the U.S (Canada, Jamaica, South Africa, UK, Germany, Netherlands, England, Ireland, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, China, and Australia) also participated.

In addition to gathering data on usage, we sought feedback from users during the program by inviting them to complete two separate online surveys. Participants were also encouraged to share feedback or ask questions of us via email at any time. Survey comments demonstrated the program's positive impact on participants, illustrating that 23 Framework Things has helped participants understand the *Framework* more fully, feel more comfortable applying it to their teaching practice and institutional context, and become more aware of available *Framework*-related resources. Interview responses from 23 Framework Things participants also demonstrated the program's value. One participant remarked:

In addition to helping me rethink how I present information on the research process in one-shot, 50-minute library information sessions, 23 Things has also influenced how I present research strategies in the writing classes I teach. Over the past academic year, I used various hands-on resources that I first learned about while working on the Things.⁴⁴

Beyond the resources that participants were introduced to, some felt that the program provided a new view of their information literacy practice, with one participant stating,

the process can be taken in very small steps. Even if I personally can't create change at an institutional level, my engagement with students can be refreshed and renewed by looking at instruction in all its forms (at the desk, online, in the classroom, etc.) through a new lens. The 23 Frameworks Things helped me make some concrete changes to how I taught by finding new energy and ideas.⁴⁵

For some, it simply served as a starting point for digging into the *Framework*: “23 Framework Things has introduced me to the Framework. I now have a much better understanding of Information Literacy and have a toolkit consisting of pedagogical and practical resources at hand.”⁴⁶ Though these comments only give a sliver of insight into the impact 23 Framework Things had on participants, taken together with usage data, surveys, and other feedback, we believe that 23 Framework Things provided timely and necessary support to a variety of librarians with various needs while lessening barriers typically felt by librarians seeking professional development but lacking the funding or time to commit to other options.

Conclusion

Our experience creating 23 Framework Things taught us that there are many ways to approach professional development around the *Framework* or other topics, but they are most effective when you:

- design with the user in mind, considering options that address common barriers to participation including cost, time commitment, and location constraints
- build flexibility into the design so that you can accommodate a variety of needs and audiences
- use formative assessment tools such as surveys to do temperature checks and make adjustments to facilitate accessibility and engagement
- create and leverage communities of practice so that participants have low stakes affinity groups to gain inspiration from, forums to discuss ideas and issues, and safe spaces to try new approaches (and possibly fail with the cushion of a supportive community)
- collaborate with colleagues from various backgrounds who can bring different talents and experiences into the process of creating professional development tools

Our goal for this chapter was to inspire and empower readers to develop their own communities of practice and professional development tools. Through our examples and relevant literature, we hope readers will gain confidence in learning about and applying the *Framework* no matter their institutional context or perceived barriers. We also hope that readers will be inspired by our story to tackle other challenges despite limitations imposed by time, resources, or knowledge by finding expertise in their own backyard.

¹ *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, Association of College & Research Libraries, last modified January 11, 2016, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>.

² 23 Framework Things, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://23frameworkthings.wordpress.com>.

³ *Information Competency Standards for Higher Education*, Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), Last modified January 2000, <https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/7668>.

⁴ Leslin H. Charles, "Embracing Challenges in Times of Change: A Survey of the Readiness of Academic Librarians in New Jersey for transition to the ACRL Framework," *Communications in Information Literacy*, 11, no. 1 (2018): 226, <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/comminfolit/vol11/iss1/11/>.

⁵ Heidi Julien, Melissa Gross, and Don Latham, "Survey of Information Literacy Instructional Practices in U.S. Academic Libraries," *College & Research Libraries* 79, no. 2 (2018): 187, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.79.2.179>.

⁶ Stephanie J. Schulte and Maureen Knapp, "Awareness, Adoption, and Application of the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy in Health Sciences Libraries," *Journal of the Medical Library Association: JMLA* 105, no. 4 (2017): 349, <https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2017.131>.

⁷ LuMarie Guth and Dianna E. Sachs, "National Trends in Adoption of ACRL Information Literacy Guidelines and Impact on Business Instruction Practices: 2003–2015," *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship* 23, no. 2(2018): 140, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08963568.2018.1467169>.

⁸ Don Latham, Melissa Gross, and Heidi Julien, "Implementing the ACRL Framework: Reflections from the Field," Preprint, submitted 2018, *College & Research Libraries*, <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/17397>.

⁹ Melissa Gross, Don Latham, and Heidi Julien, "What the Framework Means to Me: Attitudes of Academic Librarians Toward the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education," *Library & Information Science Research* 40, no. 3-4 (2018): 266, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2018.09.008>.

¹⁰ "23 Things - 10 Years Later," *Library Journal*, March 13, 2017, <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=23-things-10-years-later>.

¹¹ "23 Mobile Things." Metronet, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://23mobilethingsmn.org/metronet/>.

¹² Flipgrid, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://flipgrid.com/>.

-
- ¹³ “Introduction,” Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, Association of College and Research Libraries, accessed March 1, 2019, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>.
- ¹⁴ Jan Meyer and Ray Land, *Overcoming Barriers to Student Understanding: Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.
- ¹⁵ Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, “Backward Design,” in *Understanding by Design*, 2nd ed. (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2004), 13-34.
- ¹⁶ Thomas P. Mackey and Trudi E. Jacobson, “Reframing Information Literacy as a Metaliteracy,” *College and Research Libraries* 72, no. 1 (2011): 62–78, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl-76r1>.
- ¹⁷ Between January 9-18, 2019, we conducted phone, video, and email interviews with eight 23 Framework Things participants. Their names have been withheld to protect their privacy.
- ¹⁸ Interview with participant, January 9, 2019.
- ¹⁹ Interview with participant, January 17, 2019.
- ²⁰ Interview with participant, January 9, 2019.
- ²¹ Interview with participant, January 15, 2019.
- ²² Interview with participant, January 15, 2019.
- ²³ Nancy M. Foasberg, “From Standards to Frameworks for IL: How the ACRL Framework Addresses Critiques of the Standards,” *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 15, no. 4 (2015): 699-717, <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2015.0045>.
- ²⁴ ACRL Framework for Information Literacy Sandbox, Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), accessed March 1, 2019, <http://sandbox.acrl.org/>.
- ²⁵ Project CORA, Loyola Marymount University Library, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.projectcora.org/>.
- ²⁶ Interview with participant, January 17, 2019.
- ²⁷ Interview with participant, January 10, 2019.
- ²⁸ “Scholarship as Conversation,” Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, Association of College and Research Libraries, accessed March 1, 2019, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>.
- ²⁹ Interview with participant, January 15, 2019.
- ³⁰ Etienne Wenger, Richard Arnold McDermott, and William Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge*, (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2002), 4.
- ³¹ Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- ³² Amanda Nichols Hess, “Equipping Academic Librarians to Integrate the Framework into Instructional Practices: A Theoretical Application,” *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 41, no. 6 (2015): 771-776, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2015.08.017>.
- ³³ Nichols Hess, “Equipping Academic Librarians,” 773.
- ³⁴ Nichols Hess, 774.
- ³⁵ Nichols Hess, 774.
- ³⁶ Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice*, 15.
- ³⁷ Interview with participant, January 15, 2019.
- ³⁸ Interview with participant, January 15, 2019.
- ³⁹ Interview with participant, January 11, 2019.
- ⁴⁰ New Literacies Alliance, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://newliteraciesalliance.org/>.

⁴¹ Trudi E. Jacobson and Thomas P. Mackey, eds., *Metaliteracy in Practice*, (Chicago: Neal-Schuman, an Imprint of the American Library Association, 2016).

⁴² “Engaging with the ACRL Framework,” Association of College & Research Libraries, accessed March 1, 2019, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/conferences/roadshows/frameworkroadshow>.

⁴³ “Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries and Student Success,” Association of College & Research Libraries, accessed March 1, 2019, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/AiA>.

⁴⁴ Interview with participant, January 17, 2019.

⁴⁵ Interview with participant, January 17, 2019.

⁴⁶ Interview with participant, January 17, 2019.

Figures

Figure 1

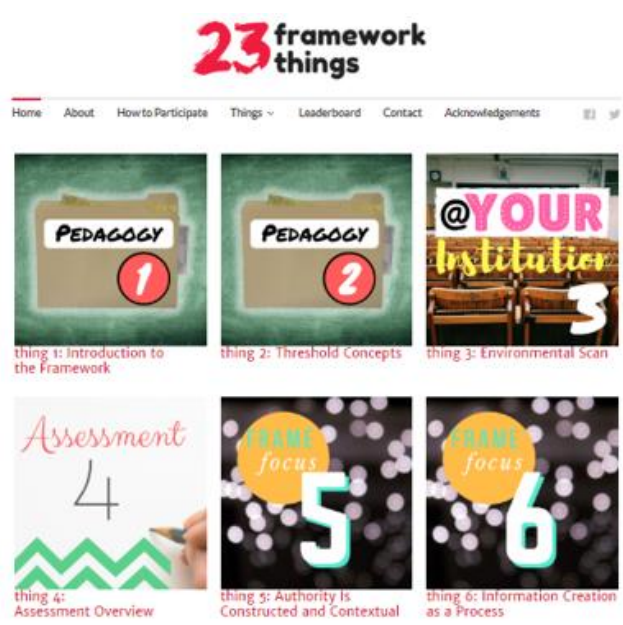


Figure 2

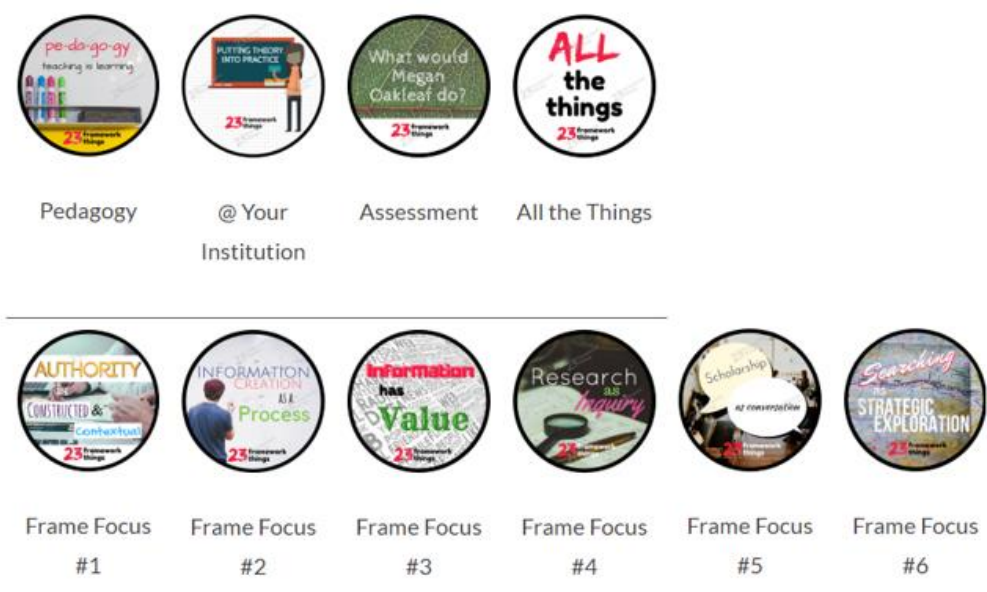


Figure 3

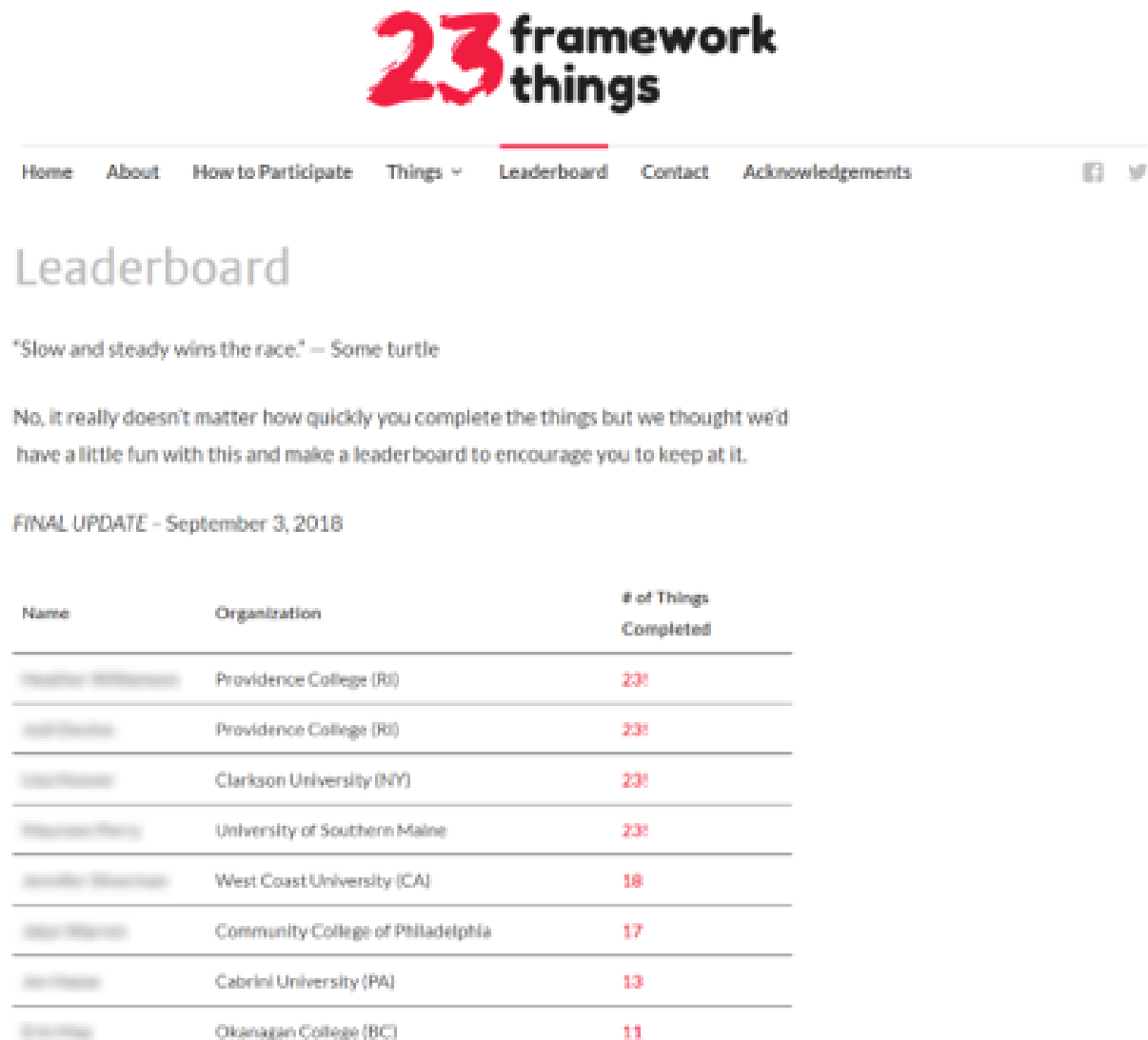


Figure 4

