

4-18-2018

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Repository Citation

Carson, A., Murray, M., Novak, J. (2018). ORCID Integration at the UNLV Libraries. 1-6.
https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/lib_articles/570

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ORCID integration at the UNLV Libraries

By A.L. Carson, Matthew Murray and John Novak, University of Nevada, Las Vegas



L-R: A.L. Carson and Matthew Murray staff the UNLV Libraries' ORCID Day table on April 18, 2018.

As of spring 2018, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries is in the middle of its ORCID implementation for campus. The process began in late 2016, when UNLV became premium members of ORCID through a deal negotiated by the Greater Western Library Alliance. ORCID provides researchers with a persistent digital identifier, which disambiguates individuals and allows them to receive proper attribution and credit for their work.

As premium members, the Libraries would receive reports from ORCID about researcher activity and have access to the ORCID API. With the API, the Libraries could receive notifications of our campus research activities and, if permitted by the researcher, update individual ORCID profiles. The Libraries also hoped that ORCID could bridge the different information systems on campus, such as the institutional repository (IR) and the faculty activity reporting system (FARS), allowing researcher-entered data to be reused in different campus systems without faculty having to re-enter it.

Library fellows help with the ORCID implementation

Early in our investigation, the Libraries realized that we needed help to explore and implement ORCID to its full capabilities. In fall 2016 we funded two library fellows — visiting faculty positions that last two years. We targeted early-career librarians and have built mentoring and professional opportunities for these fellows. To succeed, our fellows needed to be outgoing, inquisitive and tenacious. They would not only promote ORCID on campus, but persist in the testing and implementation of potential ORCID implementation strategies. Our fellows also needed programming skills, familiarity with APIs, and the technological knowledge to understand how ORCID could interoperate with different campus information systems.

Exploring use of the ORCID API

As part of the Libraries' engagement with ORCID, the fellows explored the value of using the API to add publication and employment data to ORCID profiles. After familiarizing themselves with ORCID and how other institutions use it, they tried a pilot project: They asked Libraries faculty to create dummy profiles in the ORCID testing environment and give them permission to update these profiles with real publication and employment data. While the potential value of an ORCID integration was apparent, it was determined that realizing that potential was beyond the Libraries' current capabilities (view the [complete report](#)).

For the pilot, data was extracted from spreadsheets, copied into XML containers, and manually cleaned, but this was non-scalable: Without ORCID integrations in our institutional repository and FARS, updating ORCID profiles was a resource-intensive process. Bringing information out of either the IR or the FARS into ORCID (or vice versa) required manual intervention, reducing the efficacy of a Libraries integration. Data irregularity was a blocking issue; despite multiple attempts at systematic reformatting, data from our FARS was too messy and inconsistent to transform into values expected by ORCID or structure in ORCID's XML containers with a script.

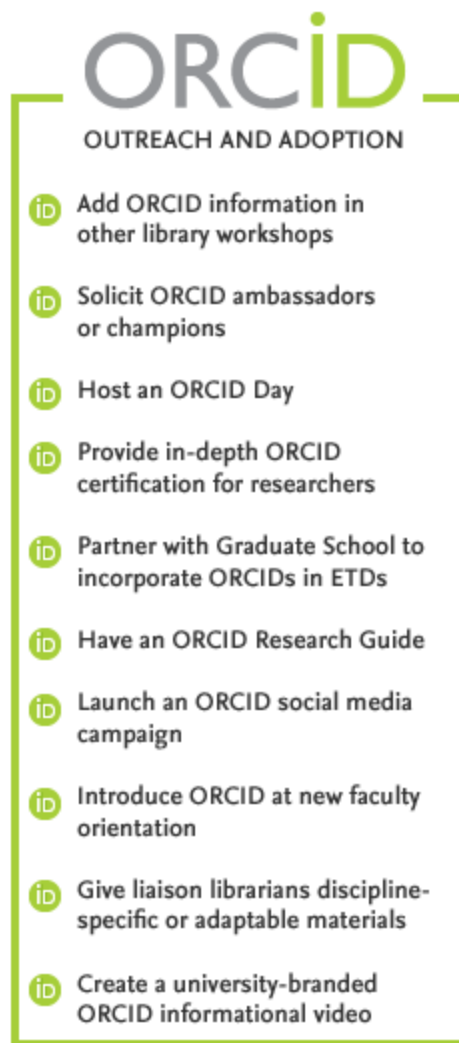
Iterating through the challenges of the pilot gave us insight into how to work with, use and promote ORCID outside of the API context. Because we are now familiar with ORCID's privacy settings, we emphasize user control in discussions with our liaison librarians and faculty; our knowledge of the work types supported by ORCID informs our outreach efforts with humanities and arts researchers as well as those in STEM fields; we point to publishers and funders requiring and integrating with ORCID when explaining the value of an ORCID iD to our community members. And the community has responded: In the time since we began our outreach efforts, UNLV-affiliated ORCID iDs have increased substantially.

ORCID outreach and adoption

After discovering that the project as initially conceived could not progress with UNLV's current resources, we changed the Libraries' goal to ORCID outreach and adoption. We saw the value that existed for faculty and researchers in adopting and using ORCID iDs, and have been working to spread this message across campus.

To facilitate adoption, we embarked on an outreach program in which we developed workshops and training materials for students, faculty, researchers and library staff. In fall 2017 an ORCID session was added to the Libraries-led workshop series aimed at graduate students; as part of the Health Sciences Library's Research Jump-Start Series, we ran a version tailored to that audience. We shared these presentations with liaison librarians and created a brief version that they could adapt and incorporate into their own discipline-specific presentations. Our online Research Guide has targeted information about ORCID for faculty, students and health sciences researchers at UNLV, and we are working on creating a UNLV-branded informational video. Looking to improve the use of ORCID by faculty and researchers after they have created accounts, we developed the UNLV Libraries ORCID Certification workshop, which gave an in-depth look at many of the features that ORCID supports.

Hoping to develop ORCID "ambassadors" or "champions," we have worked with the deans of several departments and with graduate students to help them set up their ORCID accounts. This involves a one-on-one version of our certification workshop, in which we walk them through ORCID's features, and gaining "trusted individual" status, enabling the Libraries to populate their accounts with publication data. At the invitation of the Office of Faculty Affairs, we participated in focus groups about a potential new FARS and tested the integration between ORCID and the new system. Finally, we partnered with the Graduate College to encourage graduate students to create ORCID iDs and use them in the electronic thesis and dissertation



Tips from A.L. Carson, Matthew Murray and John Novak, University of Nevada, Las Vegas @ <https://libraryconnect.elsevier.com/unlv-orcid>

submission process. The Libraries and the Graduate College will store these iDs with the intent to track students and their publication activities after graduation.

Future goals

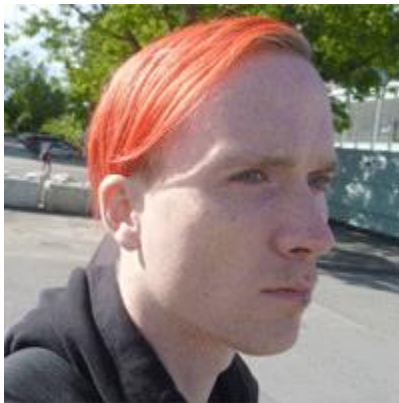
In 2018, our goals have shifted from technical implementation to on-campus promotion and adoption: We aim to double the number of ORCID iDs associated with UNLV. The next step in our outreach plan is UNLV Libraries' ORCID Day. This campus event will include signup tables within targeted departments, our certification workshop, and a social media campaign to help promote ORCID on campus. From August 2018, we will provide ORCID information and signup opportunities during new faculty orientation. While we hope to revisit the technical implementation as new opportunities arise, we are committed to promoting ORCID on campus, and will continue to integrate ORCID into the UNLV research workflow.



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