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Information is social: information literacy in context

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I. Introduction

While information literacy instruction is widespread in many contexts today, traditional concepts of information literacy focus on information use in academic environments and often ignore the application of these concepts in other communities of information use. As part of its mission to educate the public regarding local social issues and to promote the adoption of equitable social policy, the Edmonton Social Planning Council (ESPC) created a youth internship program to mentor young people who are pursuing social justice-related projects in the community. The youth internship program responds to the lack of information literacy instruction related to non-academic working environments. It provides an opportunity for young people to learn about information use in community and nonprofit settings and allows the ESPC librarian to mentor information best practices over the course of a long-term project.

This paper discusses traditional conceptions of information literacy as developed within academia to address information needs within this context. It then presents alternative realities of information use outside the academic sector. While information literacy instruction has been grounded in skill or tool based learning, the necessity of a context based approach (Sundin 2006) for non-academic environments will be explained. The ESPC youth internship program has created a means for modeling information use within an environment where a contextual understanding of information is crucial. The structure and success of this program will be presented through the description of two very different internship projects. Information needs confronted in these projects will be compared with those defined under the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (2000) (hereafter referred to as the *Standards*), to shed light on the applicability of the *Standards* to varied information contexts.

II. Information Literacy as We Know It

Librarians have been heavily engaged in information literacy instruction since the 1980s, but as Sundin (2006) notes, this practice has been concentrated within academia. Our basic concept of information literacy has been developed mainly by academic librarians working within universities. This may be largely because the American Library Association's most referenced document on information literacy was produced by its academic arm, the ACRL. The *Standards* (2000) define information literacy as "a set of abilities requiring individuals to 'recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information'." While the *Standards* state themselves to be "common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education", they are generally interpreted within the narrower focus of an education environment, and more specifically most often within the university.

It makes perfect sense that these skills would be taught within an educational context; information use is key to success in academia. In line with this, the information best practices relayed in this environment are generally those which are most strongly related to academic success (Bruce, 1999). Martin's (2008) analysis of the impact of library instruction on the information seeking behaviour of undergraduate students looks at their ability to use academic sources. Emmons and Martin (2002) examine the impact of library instruction on assignments completed by university students. Librarians

concentrate their efforts on teaching students to evaluate sources and replicate information practices most commonly used in academia (Toledano O'Farrill, 2008). Students are deemed "information literate" when they have mastered a set of tools and skills (Limburg, 2006; Sundin, 2006; Marcum, 2002). These evaluation criteria are entirely appropriate for library instruction programs designed to help students succeed in their university careers.

III. Non-academic Information Use

As a result of the focus on information literacy to help university students succeed, efforts to describe and evaluate information literacy programs focus mainly on techniques used in academic settings. This tradition of information literacy instruction is short-sighted, however, in that it neglects the broader reality that most university students face. The majority of university graduates will not continue their careers within academia but will instead pursue careers in the public, private or nonprofit sectors. These communities have vastly different information practices for locating information, and they require a different set of standards for evaluating and effectively using information. Without an understanding of broader information literacy concepts, and an ability to recognize non-academic information needs and transfer appropriate information skills to any context, students cannot be classified as "information literate".

The concept of information literacy in a non-academic sphere is seldom discussed (Strife, 1995). The basic premise of information use remains the same both inside and outside the academy. In her examination of the face of information literacy in the workplace, Christine Bruce (1999) defines information literacy as "peoples' ability to operate effectively in an information society".

The difference arises in the way people interact with and access information. Bruce (1999) describes workplace information literacy needs based on diverse technological demands instead of a particular set of tools, job descriptions composed of key responsibilities rather than specific skills, heavy dependence on social collaboration and partnerships, and the synthesis of information produced within a community.

Social interactions and relationships are some of the most important hallmarks of information use in non-academic workplaces (Toledano O'Farrill, 2008; Limberg, 2006; Kirk, 2004). Within the nonprofit sphere specifically, networking and social connections are one of the most important means for accessing and evaluating information sources (Durrance *et al*., 2006a).

IV. Rethinking Information Literacy

Clearly, an information literacy instruction model that emphasises the use of specific tools and the acquisition of a set of skills (Limburg, 2006; Sundin, 2006; Marcum, 2002) will not be adequate in a setting where social relationships are important for finding and evaluating information. Most students will not identify the need to transfer these competencies to their new context or be able to recognize their application.

Olof Sundin (2006) summarizes four models for information literacy. His first three categories are grounded heavily in work by Kuhlthau (1987, cited in Limberg, 2006), and these three models were also most prevalent in his observations of information literacy instruction in universities. The four models are:

- The *source approach*, which teaches students to use and evaluate the different types of sources available to them at the library: books, journals, statistics, newspapers, etc.

- The *behavioural approach*, which focuses on learning a set of steps to replicate a mechanical research process for any given topic; the focus here is on a set of practical skills.
- The *process approach*, which relies on cognitive models and emphasizes the dynamic nature of the information-seeking path.
- The *communication approach,* which focuses on social navigation and interaction between users over the course of information seeking.

Sundin (2006) advocates for the communication model of information literacy. This approach has the most relevance to workplace information behaviour in its emphasis on relationships and social environments. Key aspects include:

- Awareness of the sociocultural conditions in which a piece of information was created and by which it acquired meaning.
- Modeling the information behaviour of others: using references to chain-search, thereby discovering the body of thought within which an author was operating.
- Evaluating the validity of a source based on the author's status within the community in which it was created.

V. Information is Social

Sundin is not alone in calling for new literacy models that account for an understanding of the social context in which information is created. Pawley (2003) suggests that librarians should continue to teach skills and tools, but that they should also include instruction about context and the people who produce and shape information. Marcum (2002) emphasises the need for "an understanding of the publishing industry and social structures that produce information products". He reinforces the importance of understanding one's own discipline or work sector in order to be fully information literate. Limberg (2006) agrees that the value of information is socially constructed and varies within different disciplines, organizations, and communities.

Information literacy instruction has often neglected to present these concepts. It is difficult to teach individuals about the many different social constructs that shape information creation and use in various sectors, especially if students are unfamiliar with these sectors. Additionally, when the majority of information literacy instruction is taking place within the academic sphere, instructors may not be equipped with knowledge or experience related to other sectors.

VI. A New Context for Information Literacy Instruction

The Edmonton Social Planning Council finds itself uniquely positioned to offer information literacy instruction that emphasizes the social construct of information creation and use. As a nonprofit research organization, the ESPC has seventy years of history doing research on social issues within the community. Founded in 1940, the ESPC was created in response to a realization that public interest in social services was increasing and that better coordination of social services was necessary. Over seven decades the ESPC has had many faces, in response to the most pressing social needs of the day. Its main role continues to be research on social justice issues within the community to better inform local service provision. The ESPC pursues a vision for a healthy, just and inclusive community through a mission to provide leadership within the community by addressing and researching social issues, informing public discussion and influencing social policy. The organization has established a strong reputation within the public nonprofit sector and a wide network of community contacts. A current staff of five include the Executive Director and Administrative Assistant, a Research and Policy Analysis Coordinator, a Research

and Communications Assistant, and a Resource Coordinator who is an MLIS-holding librarian. The staff are well-versed in information practices within the social research community. Current ESPC projects include research on demographic and socioeconomic trends in the community, the creation of a social return on investment database, and policy advocacy regarding affordable housing and children's poverty. The ESPC Resource Coordinator manages a library of current and historical documents that have been collected for the use of nonprofit and social research communities, supports staff research on various projects, and supervises the youth internship program discussed below.

The ESPC has set itself the mandate of sharing its resources with the wider community as part of its mission for informing public discussion. Much of the ESPC's work goes on behind closed doors, producing high-quality research to inform service provision within the social services sector and to inform the adoption of equitable social policy. However, the ESPC is also keen to share its unique resources, and to make its collective skills and knowledge as open as possible. In exploring new methods for doing this, the following unique shareable resources were identified:

- Strong reputation in the community
- Wide network of contacts in the public and nonprofit sectors
- Knowledge of information best practices in the nonprofit community

Some of these information best practices that are important within the nonprofit community include:

- Recognizing information needs in non-traditional contexts
- Navigating community networks and relationships for the purposes of gathering new data
- Accessing and evaluating publications produced by the nonprofit sector, including grey literature
- Non-academic report writing and writing for funding applications
- Presentation and communication skills for non-academic audiences

These information skills all rely heavily on a clear understanding of the social context in which an individual is working. They are also skills that students in an academic environment will likely not learn, whether because academic librarians are unfamiliar with this type of information environment, or because these information skills are not necessary for success within academia.

Recognizing this, the ESPC created a youth internship program to share these best practices with young people who have a desire to work on projects within the organization's scope of social justice research. Applicants must be between the ages of 15 and 25; to this point all participants have been university undergraduates. While the internship is not paid, it is designed to be flexible around other school and work commitments, and interns can take advantage of a wide range of other in-kind benefits. Interns are supervised by the ESPC Resource Coordinator, a full-time librarian. The Resource Coordinator mentors participants through projects, helps them develop a project plan, teaches information best practices necessary to achieve project goals, and acts as liaison between participants and staff or community members who have relevant skills and resources to share.

VII. The Youth Internship Program: An Ideal Format for Information Literacy Instruction

The format of this youth internship program provides an ideal learning environment for many reasons aside from the unique set of information best practices that the organization's staff are equipped to share. It has been noted that one-shot library instruction sessions are not ideal (Martin, 2008). It is every instructional librarian's dream to be able to work with a patron over the course of an entire project, steering them through the steps of the research process and modelling various facets of information use as they arise. The youth internship program allows for this by providing mentorship over the course of several months, as dictated by the project's schedule.

The youth internship program allows participants to pursue any kind of project related to social issues in the community. They may choose to do research on a topic and prepare a report or a set of written resources. In this context, some of the more traditional information skills such as information gathering, evaluation, and report writing can be taught according to best practices within the nonprofit sector.

Interns apply for this program because they have projects they want to complete but do not know how to accomplish them. While all the program participants thus far have been university students, they have not found the tools or skills within their academic training to pursue the social justice projects that they care about. They recognize that their universities do not have access to the community networks and unique resources they need to tap into.Projects may also take a non-traditional format, such as organizing an action group to spread awareness on an issue, or preparing for a meeting with a public official to gain attention for a cause. These projects demand the same information literacy as a research project but require a different application of skills for effective information use. This context for information use is very different from the academic context that interns are most familiar with, providing an opportunity to model ways in which information best practices are relevant in all work sectors and in all aspects of social interaction. Interns are also able to reflect on how the information they work with for their project is being shaped by the unique social environment they are working in.

Over the 18-month existence of the youth internship program thus far, three projects have been initiated. Two fall into the first, traditional category described above: participants researched a topic and wrote a report providing recommendations for further action. The first such project was related to youth gangs; the second dealt with anti-bullying programs, in response to recent attempts to reform school bullying legislation. The third project falls into the non-traditional category: participants worked towards setting up a community garden. For the purposes of this discussion, one project from each of these categories will be described as a means of illustrating the information best practices that have been successfully modeled through this program.

VII.i YouthGAP: The Youth Gang Alternatives Project

A team of two interns completed the YouthGAP project. These highly-motivated individuals had recently completed undergraduate degrees; they were very competent within their academic fields and had a good understanding of using scholarly sources for research. Building on personal interests they were interested in pursuing in their careers, they proposed a research project examining the youth gang phenomenon in Edmonton, Alberta.

The format of this project closely followed the structure of many of the research projects the interns had completed during their university careers. They completed a literature review, conducted interviews with community stakeholders, and synthesized their findings to provide a set of recommendations regarding treatment strategies for the youth gang phenomenon.

Several new information skills had to be learned for the successful completion of this project due to the fact that these interns had little experience with research and information gathering in the nonprofit sector. Some of these learning curves are described below.

1. *Grey Literature*. While the interns were experienced with accessing and evaluating academic sources, this project required them to deal with vast amounts of grey literature. To refer back to Sundin's (2006) communication model for information literacy, they were required to evaluate sources based on the status of their creator within a specific community of practice,

and they needed to expand their conception of what constitutes a published source. This is incredibly difficult for individuals who are new to the field. As an organization with extensive history in the sector, the ESPC was able to guide the interns towards appropriate information sources and explain a reliable means for evaluating them.

2. *Networking.* Many information sources in the nonprofit sector are social: constant communication between stakeholders creates a network of people who know what their neighbours are working on and where to go for the sources they need. At the same time, nonprofit organizations can be notoriously possessive of their field of work. This has been identified as a barrier to information flow within the sector (Durrance *et al.*, 2006b). This is not always the case, but it requires a delicate approach when navigating community stakeholder networks. Nonprofits may exhibit possessive behaviour because they rely on project funding to remain in operation; if another group decides to do work in the same field, this presents competition for the same funding sources. Information barriers sprang up in one instance when a community stakeholder was reluctant to talk about programs and services, as a means of discouraging work by other groups in this area. Personal networks are key information sources in the nonprofit community, and the interns learned the importance of building trust relationships in order to gain information.

3. *Non-academic Writing.* Information literacy includes the ability to appropriately use information that has been found. In the context of this project, this involved the production of a final report that would inform community stakeholders and public officials of realities and needs within the community. Many of the writing habits these interns had developed to be successful in their academic careers were of little or no help in the creation of their final publication. Writing for academia is quite different than writing for other work environments. Within the nonprofit sphere specifically, a certain writing style is expected and necessary if information is to be shared effectively. Much more time was spent on the editing process than expected because this proved to be a huge learning curve for the interns.

   Some of the key writing skills that allow for effective information sharing in the nonprofit sector include conciseness and simplicity. Community stakeholders and public officials are busy and rarely have time to read past the first page. If a publication contains heavy paragraphs and long sections it will remain unread. Coming from a university environment, this was contrary to the interns' experience. Interns learned the value of breaking apart ideas into short sections, providing lists of highlighted recommendations, and writing a clear and concise Executive Summary. This format of synthesizing information was new to them, and the skills they learned will allow them to contribute useful information resources to similar communities of practice in the future.

4. *Public Communication.* At the culmination of the YouthGAP project, the interns were invited to present their findings at a meeting of community stakeholders interested in issues surrounding child poverty. Much like the learning curve involved in writing for busy nonprofits, this experience taught valuable lessons about communicating in a non-academic sphere.

   While the interns had experience presenting research projects in a university context, they were unfamiliar with best practices for effective verbal communication to a non-academic audience. They learned that their audience was not interested in background research and methodology, but was instead concerned with the present situation and recommendations for

moving forward. While exhaustive detail may be required by academic audiences it is less useful and sometimes even inappropriate in this context. Brevity and simplicity makes for the most effective communication style with this audience.

From start to finish, this project required that interns learn new information skills not only related to finding and evaluating existing information sources in the field, but also with regards to synthesizing their work into a tool that would appropriately fit the audience they wished to communicate with. As individuals who hope to continue being involved in the nonprofit sector, they are well equipped for success. However, it could also be suggested that they have learned to analyze their information context and transfer their skills to a degree that would make them successful in any information context they choose to be active in.

VII.ii Thinking Outside the Flowerbed: a Community Garden

As described above, applicants are allowed to pursue any type of project that addresses social issues within the community. Under this broad umbrella, a group of interns worked on creating a community garden for students at a nearby university as well as citizens in the surrounding neighbourhood.

This project required a great deal of information gathering, evaluation and use, albeit within a fairly non-traditional context. The applicants approached the ESPC because they recognized that they needed help finding information resources within the community in order to be successful. This marked an important first competency: interns must recognize that they have an information need. While this may be intuitive to a young person confronted with writing a research paper, a group that wants to start a community garden may not identify that information need lies at the root of the project they are confronting.

Over the course of the project, many opportunities arose for recognizing appropriate information use as the solution to a variety of problems:

1. *Building community relationships*. Durrance *et al.* (2006a) have emphasized the importance of networking and social connections as a means of accessing and evaluating information sources within the nonprofit sphere specifically, and within community-related work in general. The gardeners recognized that their project would not be successful without a strong network of relationships in their community, including the Community League, other neighbourhood organizations, and individual citizens. They pursued an internship in order to take advantage of the ESPC's existing relationships with these organizations as a means of more effectively obtaining and sharing information.

2. *Finding Experts*. If sources should be evaluated based on their credibility within the community in which they were created (Sundin, 2006), the best resources to look for are the experts. Working to set up a community garden, the interns realized they needed to find local experts who could share their skills and give advice on how to make the project succeed. This required navigating community networks and building relationships with individuals who could point towards experts in a variety of fields.

    Once these experts were located it was necessary to devise a way for them to communicate their knowledge by the most appropriate method. In this context, it was decided that workshops would be the best way to share this information to the group of volunteer

gardeners. It was also decided that this expertise should be captured in the form of short, written resource guides that can be used in future years. The interns thus created a means for preserving organizational memory to ensure that the project will carry on successfully into the future without any need to gather information again each time the leadership team changes.

3. *Writing for Funding.* To ensure long term success of the community garden project, the interns set themselves a goal of obtaining funding that would guarantee some level of financial security for the following year. Grant application writing is an important skill, and as a nonprofit organization the ESPC has extensive experience in this area. The interns learned about researching grant opportunities, communicating with granting agencies, and writing funding proposals. Some of the important skills involved in proposal writing include following specific guidelines, developing project outlines, and communicating goals and objectives clearly.

4. *Effective Organizing*. Planning workshops and creating long-term informational resources are one component of accessing and sharing information within a community of users. Several other information strategies were necessary for communicating with the group of volunteers responsible for making the community garden a success. The interns learned about basic information management strategies for groups such as setting up email lists, social networking pages, and wikis. These information tools were all crucial for making the best use of manpower and ensuring that no volunteers were less involved because they lacked information.

5. *Financial Information Management*. Other management roles demanded that the interns navigate unfamiliar information contexts. The leadership team decided that they would need a bank account to appropriately manage the grant money received. This required evaluation of information materials related to nonprofit bank accounts offered by different banking institution. After collecting a variety of resources and researching the financial needs of other community groups, the interns were able to make an educated decision about which banking institution to choose. They also learned about managing financial information: how to budget, and how to track expenses using financial spreadsheets.

While a community garden project may not seem like the most obvious context for teaching information literacy skills, it proved to be an excellent environment for interns to learn about using information in non-traditional contexts. They began by recognizing the wide variety of goals they needed to meet for their project to succeed and then looked at ways to access information that would allow them to meet their goals. This project was heavily dependent on relationships and social networks for information transfer, which is a hallmark of information behaviour in many workplaces. The ESPC librarian was able to model the transfer of traditional information skills—accessing resources, evaluating sources, using information effectively and sharing it with others—to a new context. As the interns developed these habits for good information use, they were no doubt transferred to other contexts in which they were equally valuable.

VII. A Summary of Information Behaviour Learned

A brief summary of the new information behaviours learned in these youth internship projects reveals common themes. These themes highlight the skills and resources that drove participants to apply for their internship position. While the interns also utilized research and information skills they had gleaned in their university careers, such as basic project planning and research know-how, their academic expertise did not equip them to complete their projects. The themes described below reveal where interns' academic information literacy training fell short.

For the purposes of highlighting common information needs dealt with in this program, skills learned for the third youth internship initiative – a research project on anti-bullying programs – are also included in this summary. The anti-bullying project was very similar to the YouthGAP project described above, in that it involved grey-literature research and networking with community stakeholders. Its final product was a report with policy recommendations.

The skills that interns learned to complete these three projects are summarized below:

YouthGAP	Community Garden	Bullying
Dealing with grey literature	Building Community Relationships	Dealing with grey literature
Networking	Finding Experts	Networking
Non-academic writing	Writing for Funding	Non-academic writing
Public Communication	Effective Organizing	
	Financial Information Management	

It is evident from this list that many of the skills required were common to all projects. First, all participants worked with new sources, whether grey literature or community networks. Second, each project necessitated new means of information retrieval. While familiar methods of information retrieval (surveys, catalogue and database searching) were used for each project, the new information retrieval skill that each intern or group of interns learned was networking. Third, each project required that interns learn new techniques of organizing their acquired information in order to effectively communicate their message with the intended audience.

A discussion of the most common challenges for all internship participants is facilitated by comparison with the ACRL *Standards* (2000). While the interns exhibited many behaviours recommended under the *Standards*, they fell short in key areas. This comparison sheds some light on the roots of this problem.

Skills that were involved in these projects but which the interns had already acquired, such as articulating information needs or constructing search strategies, are not included in this discussion. Rather, the points below highlight how unique skills learned for the successful completion of these projects correspond with the ACRL *Standards*.

1. All three projects required use of new sources that interns were not familiar with. For the YouthGAP and Bullying projects this took the form of grey literature. Interns managing a community garden had to acknowledge that people, not books and journals, might be their best information source. This fits under ACRL Standard One, Performance Indicator Two: "The information literate student identifies a variety of types and formats of potential sources for information". It is notable that grey literature and personal expertise are not included in the list of potential resources given under this standard.

2. While the interns who completed the YouthGAP and Bullying projects conducted interviews to gather information, they did not need to learn interview techniques. These were skills they had already mastered in their university careers. However, these interns needed to learn how to network in order to find the best interview participants within the community. This networking also gave them access to grey literature produced by community organizations working in related areas. Community garden interns needed to learn networking skills in order to build community relationships that would lead to information sharing, and to identify experts who could impart the best skills and resources. ACRL Standard Two, Performance Indicator One

states that "The information literate student selects the most appropriate investigative methods or information retrieval systems for accessing the needed information". Networking was the most appropriate investigative method in these situations, and interns learned how to successfully retrieve information in this manner. There is little direct reference to this social aspect of information retrieval in the description of this ACRL standard; the closest corresponding method is a brief reference to "fieldwork".

3. ACRL Standard Four emphasizes the effective use of information: "The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose." For the successful completion of their projects, interns learned how to write non-academic reports that could communicate their findings appropriately to community agencies and policy makers. They learned how to use different media to organize groups and share information with a wider community of participants. They gained insight into communicating with potential funders and effectively managing financial information. These skills all fit directly under the third performance indicator of Standard Four: "The information literate student communicates the product or performance effectively to others". While some of the aspects of communication described above fit obviously into this category, financial information management, organizing groups and writing for funding are less intuitive under this Standard. Traditional application of this standard provides little guidance on how a "product or performance" could equally be a non-scholarly work.

This examination of skills learned in light of the ACRL *Standards* is useful because it highlights that none of the new information skills interns needed for their projects fall radically outside the realm of the *Standards*. Many of them, however, differ from traditional readings of these measures and their performance indicators. They all contrast with prevalent interpretations of the *Standards*, largely because they were designed for academia and traditional academic interpretations do not account for application in context outside the academic realm. However, not all students who learn information behaviour in an academic context will continue to work in this environment. By demonstrating to students how the context of an information community is relevant to the project they are undertaking, the youth internship program mentors behaviour that will help students succeed in any environment.

VIII. Conclusion

Many universities provide invaluable information literacy instruction to their students through workshops and courses. However, the approaches followed and skills taught by many of these programs are often not applicable outside the walls of the academy. Information best practices are highly dependent on the context in which individuals finds themselves; students who continue their careers outside academia may not be equipped to transfer their information use skills to other environments. The ACRL *Standards* (2000), while broadly applicable to non-academic contexts, do not provide concrete direction for information use dependent on the context in which it is produced. Instead, they rely on assumptions about the context of information within academia. Recognizing the importance of social context to the production, evaluation, and communication of good information is a key awareness that will allow individuals to relate their skills to whatever context they find themselves in.

As an established and successful organization within the nonprofit sector, the Edmonton Social Planning Council has achieved its status as a reputable social justice research group because it has effectively navigated the information-sharing context it finds itself in. The ESPC has established a network of relationships in the community that allows it to access information efficiently, has

maintained a level of involvement in local issues that allows it to identify authoritative information sources, and has learned techniques for effectively communicating the information it produces to the wider nonprofit and public sectors.

By sharing these information best practices with young people who have little or no experience in the sector, the ESPC has created a means for teaching information literacy skills that interns would likely not learn in any other environment. The ESPC youth internship program sets participants up for successful navigation of any type of information environment by opening their eyes to the importance and value of factoring context into one's approach to information. Young people learn how to recognize their information need in any context and successfully find, evaluate and use information within the social environment they are working in.

It is difficult to follow up with interns to observe how they become models of good information behaviour in their non-academic lives after completing the ESPC youth internship program. While the program sells itself as a training ground for information behaviour related to the nonprofit and social services sectors, the success of this is admittedly hard to measure beyond the interns' final projects. However, maintaining contact with even a portion of the programs' participants will relay stories of successes and failures that can be used to strengthen the program and inform the development of future projects.

As a program that has only existed for 18 months, the ESPC youth internship program is still evolving to determine how it can best meet the needs it has highlighted. Partnerships with other groups have been pursued to explore how the benefits of this program can reach a wider audience. It has also been suggested that partnerships with other community organizations could allow interns to learn a wider range of information skills, such as business information. As these skills are relevant to the social justice projects that fall under the mandate of the ESPC youth internship program, such partnerships will be explored. However, this suggestion also points to the need for information literacy instruction in a variety of non-academic contexts. Business-minded organizations could consider setting up their own internship programs, modelled on successful aspects of the ESPC youth internship program, to teach information behaviour relevant to this realm of work. The various contexts within which such programs could be created are endless.

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