

A Snapshot of the Learning Needs, Gaps and Interests of a Canadian Health Science Libraries Consortium

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The **Health Sciences Information Consortium of Toronto** (HSICT) has a geographically wide, and diverse membership. HSICT is comprised of over 40 libraries and information services based in teaching and community hospitals, public health units, government and non-government organizations and health sector educational institutions, located across the Greater Toronto Area.

The **Professional Practice Subcommittee** (PPSC) is a sub-group of the HSICT. PPSC offers opportunities for professional development and a forum for the support and exchange of resources and knowledge to help library professionals increase their value, stay competitive, and learn skills critical to job satisfaction and career progression. PPSC also works to assist members in communicating the importance of the health science information professional's skills and knowledge, as well as the critical role library and information services plays in achieving excellence in patient care, research and teaching in member institutions.¹

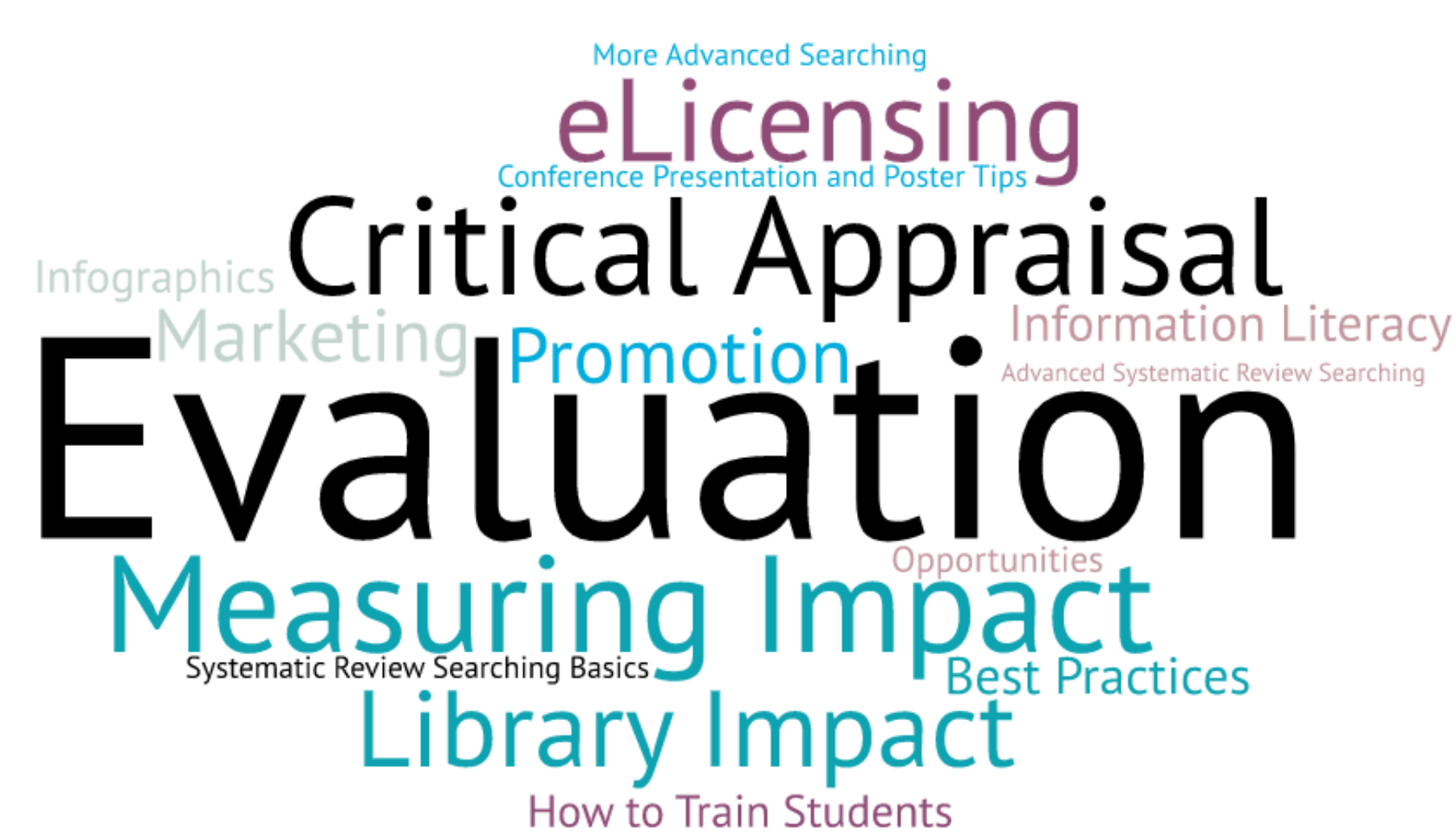
The following 2015-2016 data provides information on educational events, attendees' feedback and HSICT members' self-perceived learning needs, during our reign as co-chairs. Limitations of the data and challenges we have experienced are also discussed.

Survey data is available for all formal sessions hosted by the PPSC. Questions asked on the surveys have remained consistent for each event, and focus on learner satisfaction with content and pace, and professional applicability of each event. In addition, event attendees are queried for feedback on their perceived unmet learning needs and interests. All surveys are administered in paper format at the end of each educational event.

Overall, feedback has been consistently positive for all events. Survey completion rates have always been good, but are improved when attendees receive a certificate of completion for the educational event after filling out the survey. We have been able to identify preferred speakers and learning structures via survey comments. The highest positive comment count has been received for the following two events:

1. Lightning Presentations: During our Intermediate Systematic Review half day, we invited 6 systematic review "experts" to present a 6 minute presentation on the topic of their choice. The diversity of topics in a short period of time maintained the interest of attendees. This presentation structure has been requested repeatedly since.

2. Making a Case for Your Library: A one hour presentation on library advocacy. The perceived value of this presentation came from concrete examples of how to advocate for your library, while remaining broad enough to be applicable to myriad information services and libraries to whom PPSC caters.



Top 5 Topics of Interest:

1. Measuring Library Impact
2. Critical Appraisal
3. Conference Presentation/Poster Tips
4. Advanced Systematic Review Searching
5. eLicensing

A limitation of our data is that the survey used has not been validated. In addition, the overly positive feedback may be due to acquiescence bias², and response bias³.

Despite positive feedback from events, there are constant challenges in meeting the needs of a diverse group that must be considered:

- Variety in audience makes it difficult to organize events that are appealing to everyone. For example, several HSICT members are solo librarians and this group may have unique learning needs
- The geographical distance of many HSICT members can make physical attendance to events challenging
- The format of PPSC events have been designed for in person attendance, which makes adaptation for remote attendance challenging
- Time is always a challenge for the organizers
- Brace yourself - Guest speakers may mean surprises!

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank all current and previous members of the PPSC. We also thank current HSICT executive director Lori Anne Oja, and previous director, Miriam Ticoll for their support and guidance during our time as PPSC co-chairs.

2015-2016 PPSC Hosted Events



Professional Practice Day 2015

Topic: Data visualizations
Format: Full day session including 3 hour workshop with lecture & hands-on activities followed by "lightning talks" by HSICT members in the afternoon

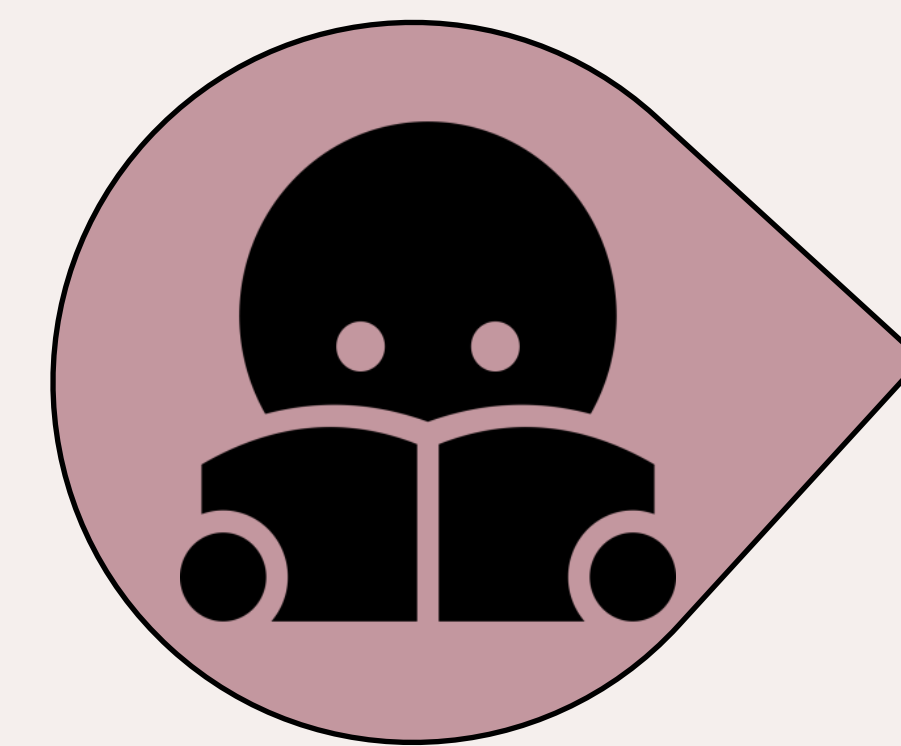
Attendees: ~30



Pub Nights

Topic: Varied. Often post-conference wrap-ups
Format: Small group, informal discussion in a casual pub setting

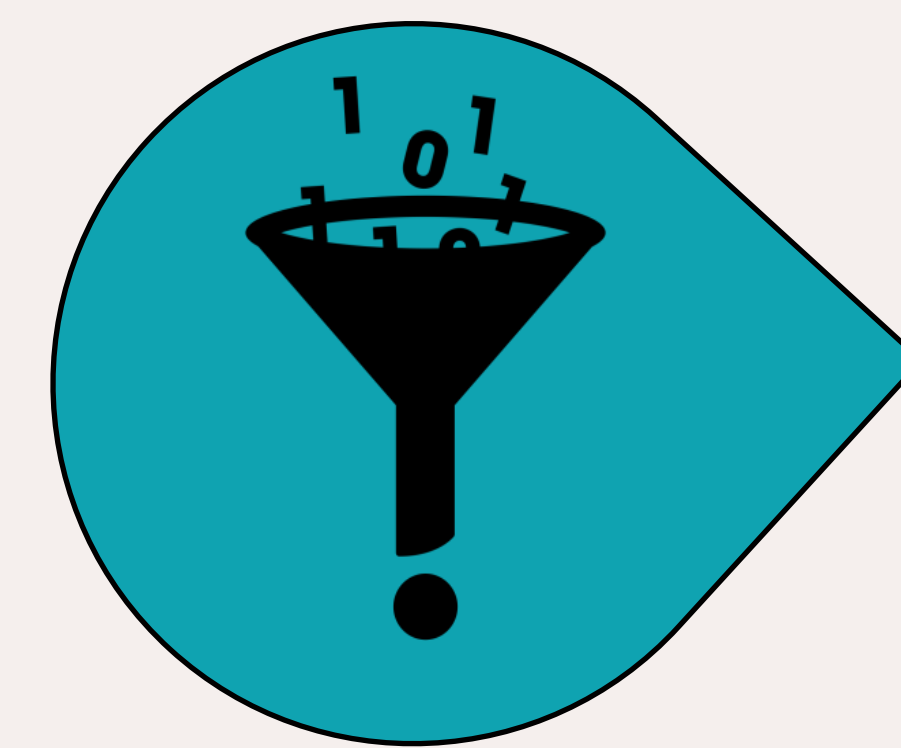
Attendees: Ranges from 8-12
**Surveys are not administered after Pub Nights.*



Systematic Review Basics

Topic: The basics of systematic reviews, for information specialists

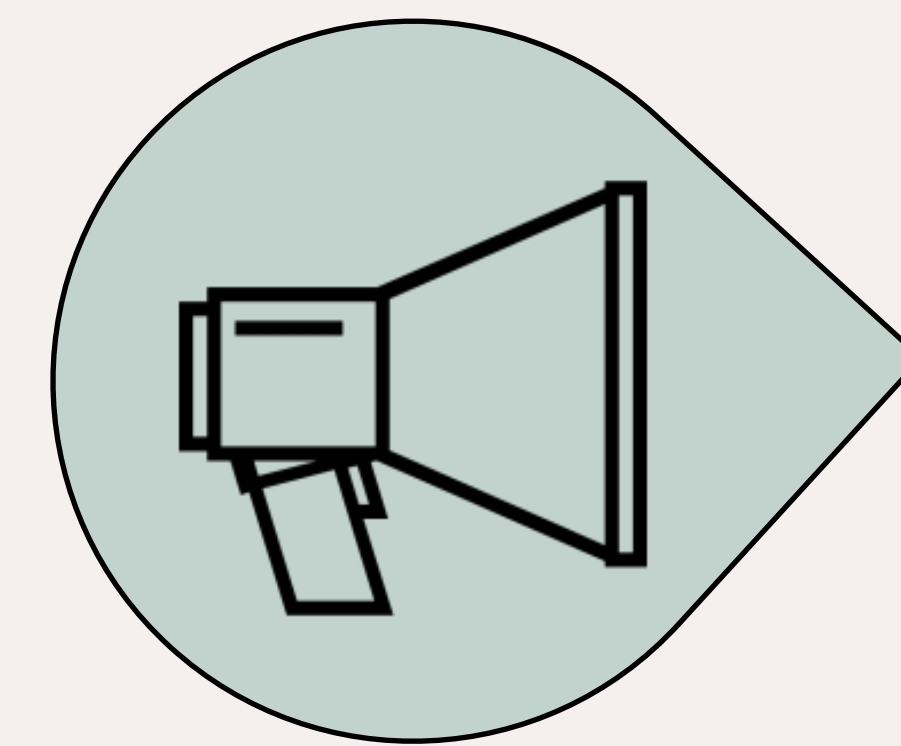
Format: Full morning session including 2 guest speakers
Attendees: 24



Intermediate Systematic Reviews

Topic: A variety of tips and topics related to systematic reviews

Format: Full morning session including 7 speakers: 1 long presentation, and 6 short presentations
Attendees: 35



Professional Practice Day 2016

Topic: Marketing and advocacy in libraries.

Format: Full day session including 2 guest speakers followed by "lightning talks" by HSICT members in the afternoon

Attendees: ~20

Works Cited:

1. Health Science Information Consortium of Toronto (2017). Professional Practice Subcommittee Terms of Reference. Available at: <http://hsict.library.utoronto.ca/committees/professional-practice-subcommittee>
2. Holbrook, A. (2008). Acquiescence response bias. In P. J. Lavrakas (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of survey research methods* (pp. 4-4). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.
3. Villar, A. (2008). Response bias. In P. J. Lavrakas (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of survey research methods* (pp. 752-753). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd

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