Submission Process and Author Guidelines for Virtual Projects

Virtual Projects Section articles highlight current, innovative, and notable technology projects in health sciences libraries. The Virtual Projects Section is published on an annual basis in the October issue of the *Journal of the Medical Library Association (JMLA)* in conjunction with an open, annual "Call for Virtual Projects" to encourage a wide range of submissions. Virtual projects are defined in the broadest possible terms to include library projects that employ new technologies or new applications (systems, communications technologies, software, social media technologies, etc.) that extend and enhance health sciences library services.

Abstract Submission and Review Process

An annual "Call for Virtual Projects" is issued in the spring via *MLAConnect* and other media. To be considered for publication in the Virtual Projects Section, authors must submit a 200-word abstract in a Microsoft Word document to the section editor by the announced deadline. All authors submitting virtual projects will receive a confirmation email. The information provided in the abstract serves as the basis for reviewing and selecting Virtual Projects that are published in the section. A *JMLA* Virtual Projects Advisory Committee, composed of recognized technology experts, reviews all abstracts that have been submitted by the deadline. Notifications regarding virtual project acceptance will be sent to the submitting authors via email by the end of May.

The *JMLA* Virtual Projects Advisory Committee makes selections of virtual project submissions based on the following criteria:

- Virtual projects must have been implemented within past two years.
- Projects can either be a new technology implementation or a new application of an older technology.
- Projects selected are considered significant to the profession and could be viewed as a model for other health sciences libraries.
- Projects that have been previously reported in the literature or are under consideration for publication are not eligible.
- Submission abstract is of high quality (thoughtful, complete, clear, etc.).

Manuscript Guidelines for Authors

Manuscript submissions of accepted virtual projects should be prepared in accordance with the manuscript guidelines below. The section editor will provide a schedule of completion, consultation, and editing as needed.

Given the currency, technical focus, and descriptive nature of the articles in the Virtual Projects Section, the scope and manuscript elements of the articles require a different format than the other types of *JMLA* articles. The following instructions are offered to assist authors preparing their manuscripts for the Virtual Projects Section:

1. Context, aims, and significance of the virtual project: Provide background information for the project (library setting, goals, participants, and resources or funding, if any). Also describe what is novel or innovative about the approach.

2. Brief description of the virtual project: Describe the core activities or phases of the project, such as planning, testing, implementation, and evaluation (if any) activities.
3. Technology used: Provide sufficient detail about the technologies used for the project. As a guideline, if the technology involved is something that the average librarian probably would not know, include some background information for readers to understand the technology.
4. Advantages, limitations, and impact: Describe the advantages and limitations of the approach taken and the impact the project had on the library and its users.
5. Contact information: Provide contact information so that interested individuals or groups who are considering such a project for their libraries can easily ask follow-up questions.
6. Links and images: Each project may include a limited number of links to relevant websites and images. Images can be in color for online issues. Resolution for photographs or images should be at 300 dots per inch (dpi). The *JMLA* does not accept screenshots.
7. References (optional): In most cases references are not necessary, but they can be included if relevant. Authors should use the *JMLA* reference style. Please consult the Medical Library Association (MLA) Style Manual.
8. Acknowledgments (optional): Personal acknowledgments may be placed at the end of the text before the references.
9. Submission process and word count: Virtual Projects Section articles are short articles that generally do not exceed 500 words. The submission file can be in OpenOffice, Microsoft Word, RTF, or WordPerfect document file format. An author starts the submission process by sending the manuscript to the section editor, who provides feedback. After this initial review, manuscripts are submitted through the JMLA online submission system.
10. *JMLA* guidelines and copyright: Please note that articles must adhere to *JMLA* author guidelines and copyright requirements.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask Virtual Projects Section Editor Susan Lessick, AHIP, FMLA, or members of the Virtual Projects Section Advisory Committee:

- Patricia F. Anderson
- Emily J. Hurst, AHIP
- Michelle Kraft, AHIP
- Susan Lessick, AHIP, FMLA
- J. Dale Prince, AHIP
- Elizabeth C. Whipple, AHIP