

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
 Scholarly Communications and Information Technology Program

Grant Reporting Cover Sheet

Date of Submission	October 19, 2012	
Legal Name of Grantee	University of Pittsburgh, School of Information Sciences	
<b>Project</b>		
Project Title	iSchool Inclusion Institute (i3)	
Reference Number	21000678	
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Grant Balance	\$306,462.39	
Interest Credited to Date	\$1774.43	
Reporting Period	7/1/2011 – 6/30/2012	
Reporting Period	Year 2	
<b>Principal Investigator(s) and Title(s)</b>		
Name(s)	Dr. Ronald Larsen Dean and Professor	James 'Kip' Currier Assistant Professor
Email(s)	<a href="mailto:rlarsen@sis.pitt.edu">rlarsen@sis.pitt.edu</a>	<a href="mailto:kcurrier@sis.pitt.edu">kcurrier@sis.pitt.edu</a>
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<i>Date Received</i>		
<i>Date Reviewed</i>		
<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Pending</i>	

**University of Pittsburgh**  
**School of Information Sciences**  
**iSchool Inclusion Institute (i3)**

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**1. Objectives**

The iSchool Inclusion Institute (i3) was developed to address a critical problem within the information sciences: *a lack of diversity among students and faculty*. i3 is based on the premise that a faculty that represents the diversity of the overall population will draw students into the information professions and the academy.

**Short-Term Goals:**

- a) To build awareness of the breadth and depth of opportunities for academically-oriented careers in the information sciences among i3 Scholars.
- b) To deliver education to i3 Scholars that develops their understanding of information career requirements and paths to success.
- c) To provide mentoring by iSchool faculty around a multi-disciplinary team project that engages i3 participants in the technical and social elements of information work.
- d) To refine the recruitment and selection of target i3 candidates over an initial three-year project period.
- e) To provide an on-campus, residential summer educational experience, designed to increase awareness of IS graduate study and career opportunities for target i3 candidates.
- f) To develop a sense of community among i3 Scholars that bridges the two summer institute experiences and sustains itself beyond to promote continuity, reinforcement, beneficial peer relationships, and multi-faceted support.
- g) To assess progress regularly toward the above goals on a cohort basis, considering the experiences of participants, instructors, mentors, and staff.

**Longer-Term Goals:**

- a) To provide individualized learning opportunities for i3 student participants to develop knowledge and skills in IS-related domain areas and raise awareness of IS career opportunities.
- b) To develop a network of faculty mentors, student mentors, and external resource persons who would encourage and assist i3 participants throughout their graduate studies and careers.

**Ultimate Goal:**

- a) To develop a prestigious and competitive program that attracts high performing students from under-represented segments of the population to seek academic careers in information schools.

## 2. Deliverables

- a) Sixty students will participate in the Institutes over the three years (2011, 2012, and 2013).
- b) At least 80% of the Institute students will complete the two Institutes and the research project.
- c) At least 60% of the Institute students will apply for graduate study at one of the iSchools. In 2008, the national average of African American or Hispanic students entering Master's programs was between 2-4%. Of those who participated in the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program, 35% went on to doctoral study. Therefore, i3 expects to match the percentage of Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellows who enter graduate study.
- d) As a result of the i3 Summer Institutes, it is expected that the pool of PhD candidates from underrepresented segments of the population or those who have a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities interested in academic positions in iSchools will increase by at least 4 per year.

## 3. Accomplishments

- a) 40 students have participated in i3. The 2011 cohort consisted of 21 students; the 2012 cohort consisted of 19 students. The program is on schedule to meet its target of recruiting 60 students into the program over the initial three years.
- b) 19 of 21 (90%) i3 Scholars from the 2011 cohort participated in the team research project. 15 of 21 (71%) i3 Scholars from the 2011 cohort were able to return for the Concluding Institute. Those i3 Scholars unable to attend the Concluding Institute cited summer classes, internships, or other obligations for their inability to attend. Only 2 students from the 2011 cohort officially dropped out of the program.
- c) All four research teams from the 2011 cohort successfully completed the team project. Each team designed a formal research poster and delivered a presentation detailing their work and key findings.
- d) Two members of the 2011 cohort began graduate programs in the information sciences in September, 2012. Ms. Toni Pizza is currently pursuing an MFA in Game Design at New York University's Tisch School of Fine Arts. Ms. Marcia McIntosh is pursuing a Masters in Information Studies at the University of Texas at Austin's School of Information. Several other members of the 2011 cohort are now preparing for the GREs and are reviewing graduate programs to identify the school that best fits their needs and interests.
- e) 2012 applications grew by 23% (59 total applications). Applications were received from students enrolled in 37 colleges and universities, in 19 different states and U.S. territories. Of the 59 applicants, 26 were female and 33 were male. Over 140 students expressed interest in the program (e.g. emailed/called or submitted a resume) or submitted partial applications.
- f) The i3 Director delivered a workshop titled '*Building the future iSchools: Visioning, diversity and i3*' at the 2012 iConference in Toronto, Canada. Three of the 2011 i3 Scholars assisted with the workshop by sharing with the audience their experiences as minority undergraduate students interested in the information sciences.
- g) The **2012 Summit on Diversity in the Information Sciences**—a collaborative event organized by the i3 Director and Dr. Randy Weinberg of Carnegie Mellon University—was held on June 8, 2012 during the Introductory and Concluding Institutes. The 2012 Summit was designed to bring together

professionals from higher education, industry, and funding institutions to share their experiences and knowledge of diversity programming. The event was sponsored using funds from the Information Systems in the Community program grant administered by Dr. Weinberg. The 2011 and 2012 i3 Scholars attended a portion of the day’s events and participated in small-group discussions with a variety of professionals. Presentations were made discussing the design and programming experiences of the Information Systems in the Community program and i3. To conclude the day, a panel discussion was held that included Dean Ronald Larsen (i3 PI) and Dr. Helen Cullyer of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, among others. The entire event was streamed live online and archived for future viewing.

- h) Four iSchools—Carnegie Mellon University, Drexel University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of Pittsburgh—have agreed to offer scholarships to i3 Scholars upon acceptance into their respective graduate program of study. Additional iSchools are currently discussing scholarship offerings and will likely join this list of institutions supporting the i3 Scholars. Scholarship details and stipulations are included in the table below.

<b>iSchool Scholarship Offerings to i3 Scholars</b>		
<b>College/University</b>	<b>Scholarship Amount</b>	<b>Stipulations</b>
Carnegie Mellon University	50-100% of tuition	Offered to any i3 Scholar that is admitted to Masters programs
Drexel University	50% of tuition	Offered to any i3 Scholar that is admitted into Masters programs; limited to 1 i3 Scholar per incoming class
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	100% of tuition	Offered to any i3 Scholar that is admitted into Masters programs; limited to 1 i3 Scholar per incoming class
University of Pittsburgh	75% of tuition	Offered to any i3 Scholar that is admitted into Masters programs; limited to 1 i3 Scholar per incoming class

- i) The i3 website was redesigned and successfully launched in October, 2011. Input and feedback from i3 Scholars was used to make changes to the website infrastructure, organization, and aesthetics.

#### 4. Challenges

- a) In an effort to increase the number of applications, marketing and recruitment activities began early in the 2011 fall semester. The i3 Director attended multiple career fairs in September and October. However, because these events were significantly earlier than in the first year, in which the spring semester career and internship fairs were attended—a smaller proportion of applicants were ultimately recruited from these fairs. The students that attended fall fairs tended to be older (juniors and seniors) and firmly committed in their search for full-time employment. It was determined that marketing and recruitment efforts should be concentrated most heavily at the end of the fall semester and beginning of the spring semester.

- b) Although both the 2011 and 2012 i3 cohorts were able to stay on the same floor of the student dormitory, concerns arose regarding the socialization and bonding between cohorts. The Office of Housing Services assigned the i3 Scholars to rooms, locating the two cohorts on different sides of the building. As a result, cross-cohort socialization was unfortunately diminished. To combat this issue, the i3 Director routinely encouraged the i3 Scholars to spend free time with members of the other cohort. In future years the i3 Director should request housing assignments so that cohorts are mingled throughout the building.
- c) Responding to feedback from the 2011 cohort, the i3 Director provided additional time in the weekly schedule for non-group meals and independent/free time. However, socialization and bonding within and between cohorts was not as strong as the prior year. Group meals and activities serve as the best opportunities to encourage strong relationships between i3 Scholars. Future curriculum modifications should prioritize downtime that is still group-oriented.
- d) The 2011 cohort provided critical feedback regarding the team research project. All teams voiced concerns that they did not receive enough support and structure in the project. In particular, at the Concluding Institute, the 2011 cohort recommended that research advisors take a more active role in the project for future i3 Scholars. However, because research advisors serve in a volunteer capacity, concerns regarding work overload must also be taken into account.

## 5. Project Personnel

Recognizing that 2012 posed new and significant management challenges—specifically in regards to simultaneously hosting the Introductory Institute *and* the Concluding Institute for the first time—it was determined that additional staffing assistance would be needed. A temporary Assistant Director position was created for the month of June, 2012 with the purpose of providing support in the following areas:

- Serve as an additional Resident Assistant (RA) in the student dormitory
- Coordinate daily tasks and activities for the Concluding Institute (returning 2011 i3 Scholars)
  - Technology setups, meal setups/cleanups, guest lecturer introductions
- Assist research teams in developing formal posters and presentations
- Serve as an additional mentor and lecturer for both cohorts of i3 Scholars
- Create an i3 Wiki, to be used as a collaborative online space

Ms. Courtney Loder was recruited to serve as Assistant Director in early spring 2012. Ms. Loder was recruited due to her strong interest and work in the information sciences as a Masters and future doctoral student. Moreover, Ms. Loder possessed valuable prior mentoring experience from working at Humboldt State University and Girl Scouts of Northern California. It was agreed that Ms. Loder would serve as Assistant Director from May 30 – June 28, 2012, fulfill the duties listed above, and be paid a total of \$2,000.00.

## 6. Publications

### *Information for All*

Pitt Magazine, Fall 2011, p.10

Online at: <http://www.zinio.com/reader.jsp?issue=416201475&o=ext&RF=PittMagFall11>

In this article, the author observed and described an i3 workshop that involved immersive environments and robots. The author detailed the program's overall structure and curriculum.

### *SILS undergraduate students selected for prestigious iSchool Inclusion Institute (i3)*

SILS Website, April 10, 2012

Online at: <http://sils.unc.edu/news/2012/i3>

The School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill published an online article announcing three of its students had been admitted to i3. The article described the program's curriculum and goals.

## 7. Intellectual Property

There were no items in this project subject to intellectual property agreements.

## 8. Future Plans

- a) Work with the iSchools Caucus to expand scholarship offerings for i3 Scholars. Scholarship offerings will drive applicant recruitment, reduce attrition throughout the program, and build long-term connections between the program and iSchools.
- b) Increase the number of student applications by expanding marketing and recruitment efforts in western regions of the U.S. Recruitment and outreach activities should be concentrated most heavily in the late fall, and early spring semesters.
- c) Further refine the Introductory and Concluding Institute curriculums and schedules. Additional hands-on projects and learning opportunities should be built into weekly activities.
- d) Schedule ample group meals and social activities to improve cross-cohort socialization and integration. Curriculum modifications should prioritize group-oriented free time.
- e) Consider scheduling the Concluding Institute to coincide with the last two weeks of the Introductory Institute—instead of the first two weeks, as was done in 2012. The 2011 cohort provided feedback suggesting that this change would improve cross-cohort integration and group dynamics.
- f) Provide additional structure to each research team. Improved communication and support from the i3 Director and research advisors is paramount to the early development and long-term success of the team research projects.
- g) Recruit a candidate for the Assistant Director position, which is critically important to multi-cohort management. The position should be filled by a candidate possessing mentoring experience and preferably a strong educational background in the information sciences.

## 9. Financial Narrative

**Remaining Balance: \$306,462.39**

**Interest Credited to Date: \$1774.43**

Because several expenditures in year two were expensed in July, August, and September, 2012, year-end budget reports provided by the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Research and Cost Accounting differ in subtotals and totals.

Individual, line-item expenditures were less varied in 2012 after initial budget allocations included in the original grant proposal were reevaluated. Additional savings achieved in year 1 from exhausting the \$100,000.00 planning grant under a no-cost extension also reduced year 2 supply costs (large bulk purchases in year 1). Salaries and benefits were slightly over budget, due to the introduction of the temporary Assistant Director position fulfilled by Ms. Courtney Loder. The redesign of the i3 website was completed for an economical total of roughly \$400.00. Career fairs and email marketing were prioritized over long-distance travel and conference attendance to reduce administrative expenditures throughout the year.

Large, favorable budget variances were again experienced in Institute expenses. Combined with lower housing rates for double-occupancy rooms, the inability of some 2011 i3 Scholars to attend the Concluding Institute resulted in significant savings in housing and transportation costs. Spending for guest speakers and guest lecturers was also an area of considerable program savings. The i3 Director utilized a relatively well developed network of professionals interested in volunteering or providing their services for minimum costs to deliver a comprehensive curriculum over four weeks. Faculty and staff from the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University were used extensively to minimize expenditures for travel and honorariums. And for those brief recruitment sessions during the Introductory Institute, Skype videoconferencing was used to connect with iSchool recruiters from across the country. These actions largely resulted in Institute savings of over \$20,000.00.

The partnership developed with colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University proved to be very beneficial for i3. Over \$6,300.00 was donated to i3 from the Information Systems in the Community project headed by Dr. Weinberg. Ultimately, 2012 expenditures were under budget by approximately \$21,000.00 (9.8% of Year 2 annual budget). Future program planning should continue to prioritize value. However, after two years of frugal budgetary planning, i3 is well positioned to increase its marketing and programming expenditures. Year 3 will likely see cautious expansions in recruitment and curriculum, in an effort to further develop the program and its reputation.

## 10. Endowment Reporting

This section is not applicable to the grant for the iSchool Inclusion Institute (i3).