Episode 108: Katie Linder

# KL: Katie Linder

# KL: You’re listening to “Research in Action”: episode one hundred and eight.

# [intro music]

# Segment 1:

# KL: Welcome to “Research in Action,” a weekly podcast where you can hear about topics and issues related to research in higher education from experts across a range of disciplines. I’m your host, Dr. Katie Linder, director of research at Oregon State University Ecampus. Along with every episode, we post show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, full transcript, and an instructor guide for incorporating the episode into your courses. Visit the show’s website at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast to find all of these resources.

Hey there, RIA listeners. I’m so excited to celebrate two years of the Research in Action Podcast with you. On this official two year anniversary episode, I thought I would talk about some of my top ten lessons learned from two years of interviewing other researchers, I wanted to share some of the results from a small listeners survey that we’ve been releasing the past couple of weeks, and also to share with you some of our download rates and other podcast stats, because that’s something that we’ve typically done in the past on our anniversary.

So let me start with these top ten lessons that I’ve learned from two years of interviewing other researchers. One of the first lessons is that we all have doubts about our skills and abilities. As much as you might think that researchers are kind of impenetrable and that they’re all super confident in terms of what it is that they do, what I’ve actually learned from talking with dozens and dozens of researchers is that especially when we first start out, we don’t really know what we’re doing and we have a lot of questions about our abilities in these different areas and skillsets that we’re trying to develop as researchers. And this is especially true when we try to transition into a different research area, we might find that we encounter a lot of imposter syndrome as we do that. So many of the researchers I talked with discussed things like trying to kind of build themselves up in confidence before they transition into a new area, they talked about finding mentors, they talked about all of the different kinds of ways that they learn new things, and also how they battle things like fear and imposter syndrome.

A second lesson is that there is something to be learned from every researcher no matter what their discipline. And if you’ve listened to the show for any length of time, you know that I love to ask even the most basic questions, because I don’t know the answers to them. Especially for research that is outside of my area, or outside of the things that I’ve read about. And I have just found so many interesting and fascinating things from each of the researchers that I have talked with. From the very basic lessons of what does it mean to conduct research from a ship in the artic, uh which is still one of my favorite episodes with Laurie Juranek where I just said, “What happens on these boats? Who’s there? How long are you there? How are you collecting this data?” I mean these are things that for some researchers are very basic information, but for people who know nothing, it can be really fascinating.

A third lesson is that you can be a satisfied researcher outside of the typical academic contexts. Again, if you’ve listened to the show for any length of time, you know that we talk with researchers from all kinds of disciplines, who end up in all kinds of places and some of those places are not typical kind of tenure track roles where they’re pursuing a more traditional promotion line. Uh, we’ve talked with a ton of different academic researchers, and independent researchers, and also researchers who’ve moved into positions outside of academia, in industry, and lots of other places. So hopefully this gives you a good picture of the range of places that academic researchers can find themselves.

The fourth lesson is that the world is certainly getting smaller with technology, because I’ve talked with researchers from all over the world for this show, and it’s been super fun to hear from people in all different parts of the world, what research looks like in Australia, in parts of Europe, how it compares to the United States, what does it mean to research when you’re in a foreign country that is outside of your home country. So it’s been super fun to see just all of the different kinds of research practices and how somethings are the same no matter where you are, and some things that are pretty drastically different.

The fifth lesson is how generous researchers are with their time and with their expertise. Of all the people that I have asked to come on this show, and many of them are people that I have never met and have no idea who I am, have no idea what the show is – I have had maybe a handful who have said no. Who have said maybe they’re too busy, or they just can’t fit it in, or they just don’t feel like they’re a good fit – but the majority of people – the vast majority of people that I cold email and say, “Hey. Can I have 60 minutes of your time to record an episode?’ they say yes. And they’re so friendly. I feel like I’ve created this huge network of friendly researchers that – now I know and I’ve had this interesting conversation with. So that’s been a huge lesson – is how generous researchers are with their time, and also sharing what they know about their particular research projects.

Kind of along with that, my sixth lesson is that researchers are some of the most creative people I’ve ever met. And you might think that researchers are not creative people – that maybe they following a lock step set of things that they need to do for their study, but when it comes to developing research questions, to trying to think about what kinds of methods or designs you may want to use to answer those questions. And just kind of the generative nature of research in general, you find that folks are really, really creative, and they have lots of interesting things to say, they’re combing old information in new ways, they’re really thinking about problems and putting that creative muscle in their brains to work, and we get a glimpse of that on this show and I just really enjoy that part of it.

The seventh lesson is that I’ve found everyone’s pathway into research is incredibly unique. From whether people go into research related to what their Ph.D. was about, to people who don’t pursue a Ph.D. and end up in a research position, to people who end up leaving academia to go into industry, or corporate research, or foundation research. People have these incredibly diverse pathways. And one of the things, that you probably know I love to dig into on this show are people’s origin stories. What brings them to where they are now? What brings them to kind of launch them into thinking about their most recent book project, or their kind of line of their study – maybe they started out in – what made them shift to something else? You know, I’m always really interested in people’s pathways, and they’re just incredibly diverse. Everyone has their own story, and being able to have kind of that privilege of asking people those questions and learning about individual stories has been a huge benefit of being able to host this show.

The eighth lesson from two years of interviewing other researchers, is that the research community is incredibly strong, and I say this especially on places like Twitter, where people are engaging with the show or they’re sharing out different episodes, where they’re asking questions and getting really good responses from people about methodology, about design, about the job market, about higher ed more generally. The research community is one where we’re looking out for each other. And sure there’s some competition within this community, and concern about intellectual property and you know, all of those kind of good things that we can’t necessarily set aside. But I’ve learned through interacting with all of these different researchers on the show, and also with interacting within a community of people who are listening to Research in Action on social media, that this a community that cares about each other – and it’s a strong community, and a community full of really good and interesting people.

The ninth lesson is that higher ed researchers a literally changing the world. When you hear about some of the topics that people are bringing to this show, I can’t even wrap my brain around what some of these things actually are, and how it is going to be world changing in terms of the results that people are finding. And maybe not world changing in the sense of literally changing the entire world, but definitely world changing in the sense of how they are impacting individuals – and in some cases with some of the climate change research and the technology research that we’ve interviewed people about, it definitely is world changing. People are looking at really cutting edge topics, and trying to figure out how they can make contributions that are practical, that other people can use, and that are going to help build on what has come before them in a really interesting and important way. So the huge range of people that we bring onto this show really gives me a lot more faith in what science is all about, and what we’re trying to do with our research, and how we’re trying to learn new things, make change, and contribute back to the literature.

And then the tenth lesson I’ve learned from all of these interviews is the importance of project management and collaboration. The project management pieces for this show and the team effort that really goes into planning ahead for these episodes, making sure that we have an episode every week, that we plan the episodes at least a month in advance so that we can always share out our preview clips every month – and the team that I work with here to record the episodes, edit the episodes, create the show notes, develop the transcripts, create the instructor guides for every show, get everything uploaded to the website, make website changes, make branding changes to the podcast, it is an incredible team effort, and a wonderful, amazing group of people working behind the scenes with me to produce this show every week. So uh, currently, just to give you little peak behind the scenes, we’re booked out for the next several months of guest, because we try to do so much in advance, and it just takes a lot of organization to make sure that I can get those recordings done in the midst of a relatively heavy travel schedule, and of course all of the other things that we are doing in the research unit to produce original research on online teaching and learning.

So those are my kind of top ten lessons. I think that this show is incredibly rewarding personally for me, but also we’re putting out content that other people are finding really useful as well. So I’m going to take a brief break, when I come back in the next segment, I’m going to share a little bit of information from our listeners survey, and also in segment three – some of our download rates and other podcast stats that you might find interesting. Back in a moment.

The Research in Action Podcast is one of many innovative projects that are a result of the hard work of a great team of people at Oregon State University Ecampus, a nationally ranked leader in online education. Oregon State Ecampus delivers nearly 50 degrees and programs online, making an Oregon State University education accessible to learners worldwide. Learn more at ecampus.oregonstate.edu.

# Segment 2:

**KL:** In the first segment,I talked about some of the top ten lessons that I learned from two years of interviewing other researchers. But in this segment, I want to talk about some of the things I learned from our listener survey that we out for just a couple of weeks knowing that our two year anniversary was coming up. This was a survey that we developed in house just with a few questions, and we mostly promoted it through social media and through our monthly email list. Now we didn’t get a ton of responses, given the fact that we have over 1,000 followers on Twitter, and we have thousands of downloads from the podcast every month, and I’ll get to that in segment 3 in terms of our podcast stats, but we had enough to show me the diversity of what we have in terms of our listener base. So we had total, eighteen responses from people for this listener survey, and here are the things that we can tell even from that small sample;

The first thing is that our listeners are from an incredible diverse disciplinary base, and I had some sense of this just by looking at the kinds of people that are following us on Twitter, the kinds of email questions that I get from a lot of different position titles, but let me just give you a sampling of some of the people who responded to this survey. We asked about their job title, and/or their discipline, and we had instructors of technology, we had people in enrollment management, an assistant director of institutional research, an assistant professor of applied linguistics, an assistant professor of organization development, people representing health administration, biology, evaluation, nursing, educational research, English as a foreign language, we also had corporate trainers, adjunct instructors, we had university analyst who all responded to this survey. So a really wide range of people who are listening to this show, and that’s actually one of my favorite things about our audiences; is how broad they are and all of the different places that they’re coming from. So we also found out from this survey that our listeners are pretty loyal. We had over 70% of the people who responded who listened to 11 episodes or more of the show, and about a quarter had listened to 31 or more episodes. That’s a lot of listening time listening to this show – given that every show is about 30 minutes, and we’ve got all of the bonus clips and everything to provide as well. So that was incredible to hear. This is one of those shows where I am always kind of curious how much people jump around and listen to different kinds of episodes that are really just more pertinent to the work that they do, but we’ve definitely heard from some people who say they listen to every episode, which is always fun to hear and we just really value that you’re spending your time with the show and that you find it useful – that’s really exciting to us.

We also learned from this survey, that social media is where most people are hearing about this show. And this was also something that wasn’t really surprising to me, because we get a lot of retweets and a lot of traffic especially on Twitter. When we release the episodes there’s a lot of kind of passing around, of the information of the episodes to colleagues and letting people know that they might find it interesting. Um, and that’s something that we really appreciate among our listeners - is if you’re on Twitter and you can follow us @RIA\_Podcast, share out the show, because we’re also constantly posting about back episodes of the show, and trying to help people kind of see the backlist of what we have published. As of this episode, we have well over a hundred episodes that are out there with all of these nuggets in the bonus clips as well, so helping people to find things that we put out into the word almost a year ago when we first started in April of 2016, is really important for our listener base, and making sure that people are not just seeing our new content, but also some of that older content as well.

We also wanted to know where people are listening to this show, and not surprisingly, people are mostly listening on their commutes – and I say ‘not surprisingly’, because podcast data in general shows that people are primarily listening to podcast on their commutes, and this is actually why we have created the timing of the podcast as we have. Because the kind of sweet spot for podcast is usually between 25 and 30 minutes, because that’s the typical length of someone’s commute. So we have heard that people are mostly listening on their commutes, but also some people are listening at their work, when they exercise, or when they’re doing things like chores. So kind of typically podcast listening task, but I’m glad to hear that maybe we’re helping you get your dishes done, or walk your dog, or whatever it is that you might be doing.

One of the other things we asked from our listeners is, what has been your biggest takeaway from this show so far? And we got a lot of really amazing responses. And I want to read just a few of them, because I think that they’re really interesting to hear what people are taking away, and the diversity of what people are taking away. So, someone said that they are taking away that there is a system available for colleague to overcome the challenges associated with being an academic. Another person said that anyone can do research, but there can be numerous problems in conducting it – that, and productivity tips. A third person said the questions researchers are asking and the different ways they find answers. A fourth person said “there are so many incredible people doing research in higher education” – that one I couldn’t agree with more. And then a fifth person said, “My biggest take away is that I’ve been able to learn more about research, writing, and being a productive member of the academy. Although I am not the target audience for this podcast, the topics and guest have presented an insight to a world that I only knew a little about. I aspire to become a researcher, a faculty member at some point in my career, and this podcast has inspired me and given me the confidence that I can do that. Sometimes it helps to learn about other people’s jobs and life experience to gain the confidence to explore or pursue that for one’s self.”

So I want to say, a huge thank you to anyone who took the time to answer our listener survey, and also to just generally think all of our listeners who are out there checking out the show and sharing it with your friends and colleagues. It is an incredible privilege to be able to produce this show every week, to be able to connect with you, to be able to share information with you, and share other researchers experience with you. It’s one of my favorite things about my job here at Oregon State Ecampus. I’m going to take another brief break, when I come back, I’ll talk a little bit about some of our download rates, and other podcast stats that you might find interesting, back in a moment.

# Segment 3:

**KL:** In this segment, I thought I would talk a little bit about some download rates and other podcast stats that you might find interesting about this show. And something interesting to know about download rates, is that they’ve kind of changed over the past year in terms of how they’re measured. And so the place that we kind of draw these statistics from is called Libsyn. This is where we host all of the audio, and how we send out the show through an RSF feed, and how the podcasting community has been counting downloads shifted within the past year. So we have what is called a legacy stats, which is everything that happened before that shift, and then the current stats in terms of how they’re counted. So to go back and look at our stats over the last couple of years, is a little bit complicated, because we have to go back and look at all of these different places and actually like manually add some things up to figure out, for example, what are our top downloaded episodes and things like that. So just so you are aware, these kinds of demographics and stats for our podcast in particular are kind of constantly evolving.

The other recent statistics and demographics that we’ve been able to look at come from ITunes, and they’re interesting, but still very much in Beta form. So I am not going to share with you the specific numbers from those, but the kinds of things that you can find out are things like how many devices are listening to your episodes, specifically when those episodes are streaming, through the RSS feed on ITunes. So that would not count people, who for example, are using other kinds of pod catchers, or who are listening to it on Soundcloud, or who are maybe listening to the feed like directly from our website. So it’s a very small slice of the users, or a sub group of our users who are listening to our show, and you can also hear things from that data – the other kind of information that you can get is like how many minutes are listened to in each episode, and you can also see by episode specifically. But that data didn’t start getting compiled until this past October, so it’s not really a complete picture of the show, and because it’s in beta form I’m not quite sure I trust it yet to be completely honest with you. So I decided to just pull some of our stats and numbers from Libsyn, um and share some information that might be kind of interesting. But to first start with a non-Libsyn stat, it might be interesting to know that we hit over a thousand Twitter followers this year, so that was really fun. We currently, as I record this, have 1,018 people who are following us on Twitter, and we’ve Tweeted 2,762 times – which is about four Tweets per day for the last two years on average, and as of this recording we have 108 episodes of the show. We also just passed 120,000 downloads of the show. Our highest download month was actually this past March, 2018, so about a month ago as I record this, and we hit a little over 8,200 downloads that month. So that’s kind of what we’re averaging right now, every month we’ve going up a little bit. So uh, it would be really nice this year if we could hit 10,000 downloads per month – that would be super fun. Our show is downloaded in all 50 states and over 95 countries, and we have our top ten countries – which are kind of fun to look at just to see the diversity and the range of who is listening to the show. Number one is The United States. Number two is Australia. Number three is the U.K. Four is Canada. Five is Germany. Six is Japan. Seven is Sweden. Eight is Ireland. Nine is New Zealand. And ten is China. So there are lots and lots of countries who are listening to the show, but those are the ones that are the top countries. And then also it could be fun to know that the day of our highest downloads in 2016 – it was in September, in 2017 it was in May, and then so far from this year – from January on, it was in March. So um, we get people kind of downloading the show all throughout the year. One of the things that I always expect to happen is to get a lull in the summer, and that never happens – it actually goes up in the summer. So I suspect that people might be listening to the show maybe while they’re traveling, or while they’re on very long road trips. So if you are doing that, I hope that we’re keeping you entertained.

Alright so, it’s always fun for me to show the top ten downloaded episodes, so I thought I would share those as well. So the number one downloaded episode, not too surprisingly, is episode number one with Dr. Wendy Belcher on writing productivity. And this is not too surprising, because if people are like me, when they start a new podcast they want to start from episode number one or episode zero. So it’s not uncommon to get the first few episodes downloaded by the most amount of people, and that episode has been downloaded about 1,450 to almost 1,460 times. So if you were looking for maybe a potential number of maybe unique people who have downloaded the show – some people might look to a number like that, but the data there is a little bit difficult as well, because I know people kind of hop around and listen to different episodes, and a lot of people don’t start with episode number one, they start with the most recent episode of when they start listening to the show. The second highest downloaded episode is episode two – this was with Dr. John Creswell on mixed methods. This is also not too surprising – it has a little over 1,400 downloads, so maybe from the people who are starting from the very beginning of the show. The third highest downloaded episode is episode number 45, writing groups and the importance of self-reflection with Dr. Monika Raesch, Dr. Frank Rudy Cooper and Dr. Pat Reeve with a little over 1,000 downloads. This was one of my favorite episodes, because these are three faculty members that I used to work with and because we’ve all published together, so having them on the show was a real treat. The fourth highest downloaded episode is a solo episode – episode 83, where I talked about strategies for organizing your research, and this one has almost 980 downloads. 979 to be exact. The fifth highest download is another solo episode with me talking about juggling multiple projects, and that was episode number four – and I will link to all of these in the show notes in case you want to revisit any of them, and that one has 911 downloads. The Sixth highest, episode 47, Michael Alley on best practices for presenting your research, is just shy of 900 downloads right now. The seventh highest is episode 22, what you wish you knew about research from the very beginning. And this one always makes me laugh a little bit because it’s always in the top ten, and this was our first attempt at a call in episode – and no body called in. It was when we were first starting out the show – it was within the first three months and I wanted to experiment with doing it. We do have a voicemail line if you listen to our show notes, and nobody ever uses it. We did have some people right in, and I ended up talking about, you know, some blog posts and some other things that I had found, and we had some people Tweet to us and things like that. So it ended up being a really fun episode to put together, but I always find it really Ironic that it’s in the top ten, and I always feel like in some ways it’s a little bit of a failure because we never got anyone to call in. Uh okay, episode – the eighth highest episode is episode zero. This is the launch of the podcast. Almost 800 downloads, and again this doesn’t surprise me that it’s in the top ten, because it’s the very first episode that we ever released. The ninth highest is episode 92, which is a relatively recent episode we did with Dr. Stephanie Evergreen on data visualization, and that one has a little bit shy of 800 downloads right now. And then rounding out our top ten is the third solo episode of the group, and this was an episode I did, episode 73, of networking with other researchers - and also it’s just shy of 800 downloads. So uh, a really interesting group of episodes rounding out our top ten.

Alright so, those are the stats I have to share with you today, I hope you find them interesting, and I cannot wait to produce more episodes. Please always remember that we love hearing from listeners, you can always email us at riapodcast@oregonstate.edu, you can tweet to us @RIA\_podcast, and we love to hear suggestions about who you think should be on the show, whether it’s yourself or someone you think would make a good fit for the show – uh, and we just thank you so much for following along, being a part of our researcher community, and telling your friends and colleagues about the show.

So thanks so much for checking in with this year two anniversary episode. I’m Katie Linder, and I’ll be back next week with another episode.

# Show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, a full transcript, and an instructor’s guide for incorporating the episode into your courses, can be found at the show’s website at [ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast](http://www.ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast).

# There are several ways to connect with the “Research in Action” podcast. Visit the website to post a comment about a specific episode, suggest a future guest, or ask a question that could be featured in a future episode. Email us at riapodcast@oregonstate.edu. You can also offer feedback about “Research in Action” episodes or share research-related resources by contacting the Research in Action podcast via Twitter @RIA\_podcast. Finally, you can call the “Research in Action” voicemail line at 541-737-1111 to ask a question or leave a comment. If you listen to the podcast via iTunes, please consider leaving us a review.

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