Episode 120: Katie Linder

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

# [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 our website at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast to find all of these resources.

Hey there RIA listeners, I’m excited to jump into this episode with something a little bit special for you this summer. This is something we have never done but as we are getting to the middle of the summer we thought it would be fun to offer a little bit of a summer research engagement challenge and this challenge is for folks who may be trying to ease back in, thinking towards August and the beginning of the school year again. It could also be for people who are feeling a little bit demotivated with their research and who are wanting to re-engage, get energized again, think about their research from different angles.

So, this is something that has just very few simple rules. What we are hoping that folks will do is try to do as many things on the list we’re going to provide as possible but try to do at least 10 of 31 items that we’re going to share with you before August 31st. So, before that kind of last day of August you’re going to try to do as many of these things as possible. You’re also going to share your progress on social media using #RIASummer. So, if you’re on a range of different social media platform we are most active with research and action on Twitter, but if you’re not on Twitter we’d also love to hear from you via email and you can always email us about the challenge at [riapodcast@oregonstate.edu](mailto:riapodcast@oregonstate.edu) to let us know what your progress is and to give us any updates along the way.

With this challenge, we’re going give you 31 for you to check off your summer research engagement challenge checklist and this is a list that is in the show notes. So, if you want to download the full list you can check things off as you do them, and maybe take pictures as you’re going through it as well—we’d love to see that also. You can download the list from our website with the show notes for this episode. Now, you can always find all of our show notes at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast so go ahead and check it out there. We’re also going to be talking quite a bit about the challenge on Twitter so you can see links and things if you follow us on Twitter at RIA\_podcast.

Okay, let’s get to the actual checklist of things that you want to do. Now, this is a checklist that I developed. It was definitely something that I was thinking about to be fun and also to help you to re-engage back with your research in a lot of interesting and creative ways.

So, number one is to find a random article outside of your research area that interests you and read it. One of my favorite ways to do this is to go into Google Scholar and do some kind of random, you know, key term searches and see what I can come up with and find something that could just kind of strikes my fancy but by going outside of your discipline of your research area you can definitely always learn something new and maybe get some inspiration for other methodologies or how people organize their research articles; it can be a lot of fun.

Number two is to use color-coded post-its, pens, or highlighters for note-taking. If you are spending part of your summer going through articles, or drafts of things, or you’re taking notes in a research journal use some color coding and definitely take a picture and show us what it looks like.

Number three is to buy yourself a special notebook and/or pen to use for your research journal. This is something that I think can be really inspiring and engaging if you look forward to writing things down in a special research journal that you’ve purchased just for that purpose.

Number four is to read the memoir of a scientist or a researcher in your field, and if you do this, we would definitely love to start generating a list of different things that maybe other people might want to look at as well. So, if you know of any good memoirs let us know we’ll drop the list into the show notes.

Number five is write a write a poem about your latest research project and for this one in particular haikus are encouraged. Those are the really short ones, just three lines that have the 5-7-5 meter. These are really fun to share on places like Twitter and we would love to hear what your poems are about your latest research project.

Number six is to schedule a writing date with a friend. This could be at someone’s house, in a coffee shop, in a park outside but the idea is to get together with someone else; it’ll help hold you accountable. You can catch up on all the thing’s you’re doing with your research and scholarship and have some fun together.

Number seven is to go on a field trip to a location connected to your research area. So, this could be someplace that’s local to you. Maybe it’s a museum, or an archive, or something along those lines but get reinvigorated with your research by going on a little bit of a field trip summer is a perfect time for that.

Number eight is to design an internet meme about your research, and there are several of these floating around. There’s all kinds of funny memes with Mark Wahlberg talking about research in a range of ways so definitely get creative in designing your own internet meme and sharing it out.

Number nine is to create a themed music playlist for your research or writing time and this could be a theme that’s related to your research. It could also just be a theme related to the kinds of songs to get you motivated and ready to write but this would be a super fun thing to share as well. So, we’d love to see what your themed music playlist might be.

Number ten is to find a new podcast related to your research area. As you may know knew podcasts are popping up all the time and we love to hear what are the different podcasts that are related to research other than “Research in Action.” So, if you have specific ones that are really good definitely let us know and we can collect those in the show notes as well.

Number eleven is to email a researcher you respect and thank them for their work. Research can be a little bit of a thankless job, so if you know someone who’s doing really good work, maybe you’ve cited them, and you think that they’re really inspirational for you definitely let them know. Shoot them a quick email and thank them for their work.

Number twelve on the list is to contact your dissertation adviser and see what they’re up to lately. If you haven’t had a chance to check in, let them know what you’re up to. Ask what their latest research questions are; what are the projects that they’re working on? It would be great to get back in touch and see what they’re up to.

Number thirteen is to brainstorm twenty questions you want to answer with your research. So, this is really an exercise in creativity. What are all the different ways that you might want to think about your research and it can be really helpful just to start with different props like why, what, how, when, to see if you can come up with all different kinds of questions that are related to your research.

Number fourteen is to rearrange the furniture in your work or home office. Sometimes we need to get a totally different perspective on what it is that we’re working on and it can start with our physical surroundings. So, this is one of those areas of the checklist that would be awesome to get before-and-after shots. So, consider taking some pictures and letting us know how you rearrange your space.

Number fifteen is to take a day just to catch up on research reading. If you have a big pile of articles that you’ve been meaning to read, this is a perfect item on the checklist for you to gather everything that you’ve been wanting to get through and take a day just to sit, and read, and relax.

I’m going to take a quick break. When I come back I’ll go through the rest of the checklist and also give you a little bit of a reminder of how you can engage in our summer research engagement challenge; back in a moment.

As many of you know, I work as the research director at Oregon State Ecampus, which produces the “Research in Action” podcast. I’m excited to share with you that Ecampus has been ranked in the top ten in the nation for the fourth straight year by U.S. News and World Report. As leaders in online education Oregon State provides students worldwide with access to innovative learning experiences to help them advance their careers and improve their lives. You can learn more by visiting eCampus.oregonstate.edu.

# Segment 2:

**KL:** In the first segment I gave you the first half of our summer research engagement challenge checklist, and in this segment, I’m gonna go ahead and wrap up the rest of the list so you know all the other things that you can do to take part in our challenge, and I’ll give you a little bit of a reminder of how you can engage in lots of different ways with us to tell us what you’re up to.

Number sixteen on the list is to explore blogs written by researchers in your area. So, start to do some googling, see who’s out there, what are some of the different blogs and follow them. See if you want to connect with them if they are offering really good information about your discipline or your fields. So many academic blogs exist and they’re a great way to connect with other researchers.

Number seventeen is go to a research seminar or a conference presentation on a topic that is new for you. Now, this might be a little bit more challenging in the summer so if you want to find an online recording of something that is kind of falling into this category you definitely could. TED Talks might be a good example of this but the idea is to stretch yourself a little bit into new areas and learn a little bit more information from something outside your field.

Number eighteen is to create a mission statement for your research. What is it that you’re really trying to do with all of your projects and this is a great way to think about tying all of your projects together and the main strand that is really pulling everything together in your research agenda?

Number nineteen is to find a newspaper article that cites a scientific study and read the original study. Go track it down using your library database and see if you feel like the article really represents it and see if you feel like the article really represents it in a way that is kind of true to the original study.

Number twenty is to draft a strategic plan for your research over the next several years. Now, this is something we have talked about on a previous “Research in Action” episode about doing multi-year strategic planning for your research. So, I’ll go ahead and link that in the show notes but summer is a really good time to take a step back and think strategically about what it is you’re trying to do over the next several years.

Number twenty-one is to write an op-ed related to your research topic. This is the perfect time to think about what makes your research actionable. What are the kinds of information that you can share with people in an opinion column that would allow them to understand better about what it is you’re doing in your field or your discipline and how they can take action related to maybe a topic that’s timely or that’s in the news.

Number twenty-two is to watch a feature film or documentary related to your research topic. Now, we would also love to hear what it is that you’re watching so that we can collect a cool list of all the different kinds of things that people might want to check out. So, definitely feel free to tell us what you’re watching for this but this is a great way to wind down at the end of the day with a documentary related to your research topic.

Number twenty-three is to organize your paper and/or digital research files, or citation, management system. If this has been something you’ve been putting off and you want to go in and kind of get things a little bit more tidy and clean before you jump back into another school year; now is the perfect time. So, take an afternoon, set aside some time one morning and see how far you can get.

Number twenty-four is to finish a writing project that’s been hanging over your head. There is no better feeling that getting something crossed off your list that’s been kind of a monkey on your back and you need to get it done. So, this is one of my favorite parts of the checklist if you can get something done that that’s been hanging over your head so that you can move past it.

Number twenty-five is to tweet about your research progress every day for an entire week. Let the world know what it is you’re working on, what kinds of progress you’re making, and maybe even some of the things that you’re troubleshooting in your research for an entire week.

Number twenty-six is to start a writing streak of at least fifteen minutes a day for a minimum of ten days. Now, this means you have to start this one before August 21st, but it’s definitely something that is doable and streaks are really fun to get started and to maintain as well.

Number twenty-seven is to schedule a fall writing retreat of two days or more. Plan in advance so that you can get the writing retreat on your calendar and set aside more than one day to jump into a project or to get something wrapped up that you really want to finish up in the fall.

Number twenty-eight is to read an article about a research method that you’ve never used before. So, go a little bit meta with your research reading and start to think about methods and designs and this is something that is great if you have like an old methods textbook you want to read a chapter with something you’ve never done before or just read an article that uses a methodology that you’ve never encountered before and this can be a really great learning experience also.

Number twenty-nine is to use a data visualization method that’s new to you, and we’ve definitely talked about data visualization on the show as well. I’ll link to that episode with Stephanie Evergreen so you can take a listen if you’re interested.

Number thirty is to post a picture or your research space on social media. We would love to see where you’re researching this summer, where you’re getting all of those words onto the page, all of your research reading done. This is something that is always fun to see so definitely make sure to post on social media using our tag #RIAsummer so that we know what you’re up to and where.

Then the final item on our checklist is to consider incorporating an RIA episode into your fall syllabus. We have so many different episode topics now that research and action makes a great possibility to potentially incorporate into your classes even if they’re not necessarily directly about research methods and design. So, we hope you’ll take a look at the episode guide which we’ll link to in the show nots as well so you can take a listen to different things and see if it might be a fit for your students.

All right, so those are the thirty-one items and we’re encouraging you to try to do at least ten of the thirty-one items before August 31st. Remember to share your progress on social media using #RIAsummer, and if you finish the challenge or if you just want to keep us updated via email, please let us know via [riapodcast@oregonstate.edu](mailto:riapodcast@oregonstate.edu) and there might be some prizes involved for people who finish the challenge. Now, remember you can download the entire checklist of activities on our show notes page for this episode and we will also make sure to be tweeting about these different activities if you follow us on Twitter @RIA\_podcast. You can always be following along for the rest of the summer as we’re talking about these different engagement activities and yeah visit our show notes. Go to [ecampus@oregonstate.edu/podcast](mailto:ecampus@oregonstate.edu/podcast) to join in on the summer research engagement challenge fun. We really hope you’ll join us and I can’t wait to see what you do with the challenge. Thanks so much for listening.

Show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode. A full transcript and an instructor for incorporating the episode into your courses can be found on the show’s website at [eCampus@oregonstate.edu/podcast](mailto:eCampus@oregonstate.edu/podcast).

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