EBSCO Information Services Announces Four Winners for the Second Round of the EBSCO FOLIO Innovation Challenge

*Yearlong Grant Program Provides Academic Libraries Grants Totaling $100,000 for Creating Innovative Technology Services for FOLIO.*

IPSWICH, Mass. (PRWEB) May 07, 2018 -- EBSCO Information Services (EBSCO) is providing grants to four academic libraries as part of the EBSCO FOLIO Innovation Challenge. The grant program is awarding up to $100,000 in grants to libraries to develop innovative technology solutions that address the challenges academic libraries face. The second round’s winning proposals came from the University of Alabama, the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, the Johns Hopkins University and Lehigh University.

The University of Alabama has plans to create data collection, reporting and analysis tools designed to support the core reporting module for FOLIO. Leveraging the FOLIO platform’s data warehouse along with data science, machine learning and external data sources, the development team at the University of Alabama Libraries wants to help build upon the successes they have had in building custom reporting solutions to share with the greater FOLIO community.

The University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign (UIUC) will share the innovative work they have done with their kiosk-based wayfinding mobile app with the FOLIO community. The Technology Prototyping Service team at UIUC Library developed a mobile app for both iOS and Android that works with the library’s collections to help users navigate both a library’s physical and electronic collection. This team will work to improve and deliver this mobile app to the FOLIO platform.

The Johns Hopkins University (JHU) will be building out a set of APIs on the FOLIO platform that helps to expose a library’s collection in FOLIO’s Codex data repository. These APIs will allow apps to work with the library’s collection as defined in the Codex to expose the collection in innovative ways. The Library Applications development group at the JHU Libraries will also be working to include additional administrative functionality for library staff and patron-facing apps that leverage these APIs to help patrons better explore and access the library’s collection.

Lehigh University has been working to solve a problem that plagues libraries of all types and will help to bring their Lost Item Application to the FOLIO community. Managing lost items requires collection decisions and actions to take place across multiple departments in the library. Lehigh University will implement their Lost Item Application on the FOLIO platform to help bridge services between collection librarians and technical services librarians in a way that will streamline and automate the processing of lost items.

Alistair Morrison, Manager of Library Applications at the Johns Hopkins University, says the Library Applications team at Johns Hopkins is proud of its history of contributing to open source library software development. “We are grateful for EBSCO’s support of FOLIO and of our own project, which will extend the use of the FOLIO Okapi gateway to manage the API and interfaces of the online resource management application we are building. We are excited to be working with FOLIO technology and to contribute to the community.”

University of Alabama Libraries Web Technologies and Development Manager Steven Turner says, “We are excited to have this opportunity to work with EBSCO and the FOLIO project by helping bring data reporting to
the forefront of the FOLIO interface. We feel that library system data, easy access to that data and understandable reporting are important in terms of efficient decision-making, and important to the success of the FOLIO project.”

Jim Hahn, Associate Professor and Orientation Services & Environments Librarian at the University of Illinois Library, says the library will continue to integrate portions of its Minerva mobile app into the FOLIO codebase. “We are grateful for the support EBSCO has provided to making the FOLIO open-source platform available to the academic library community. The software design of FOLIO, particularly its microservice patterns, dovetails nicely with the architecture of our mobile applications, and we are thrilled to be able to support the integration of FOLIO into more libraries worldwide.”

EBSCO Information Services Director of SaaS Innovation Andrew Nagy says the winning universities meet the most important criteria — to deliver interesting features that benefit library users and that complete or augment the core functionality of FOLIO. “We created the EBSCO FOLIO Innovation Challenge to do just that: challenge universities to solve the problems they and other institutions face, and bring those solutions to the FOLIO Community which has come together around creating a future of libraries that is open.”

FOLIO is a community effort EBSCO is helping to fund and provide development and project management resources for, designed to create an open source library services platform that can also be used as a platform for innovation. Libraries of all sizes will be able to take advantage of the open source code, and companies including EBSCO will be available to provide hosting and services for libraries without a large technical services staff. The FOLIO Platform is being designed for extensibility to help libraries increase their on-campus footprint through innovation and new services to faculty and students alike. The FOLIO Community is also working together to solve the challenges libraries face today and in the future using microservices and a platform built for change.

Previous EBSCO FOLIO Innovation Challenge winners include University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign and Villanova University. Second-time winner University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign is already integrating its homegrown hardware circulation module with FOLIO. Villanova University is working to develop the integration of VuFind with FOLIO.

About EBSCO Information Services
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For more information, please contact:
Kathleen McEvoy
Vice President of Communications

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(800) 653-2726 ext. 2594
kmcevoy(at)ebsco(dot)com
Contact Information
Kathleen McEvoy
EBSCO Information Services
http://www.ebsco.com
800- 653-2726 x2594

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