




BUILDING YOUR ONLINE RESEARCH PRESENCE



The Center for Student Research
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS

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Make a ResearchGate Profile

Today, we'll help you master a major player in the scholarly social network space, ResearchGate. ResearchGate claims 15 million scientists as users, and it will help you connect with many researchers who aren't on Academia.edu (especially those outside North America). It can also help you understand your readers through platform-specific metrics, and confirm your status as a helpful expert in your field with their "Q&A" feature.

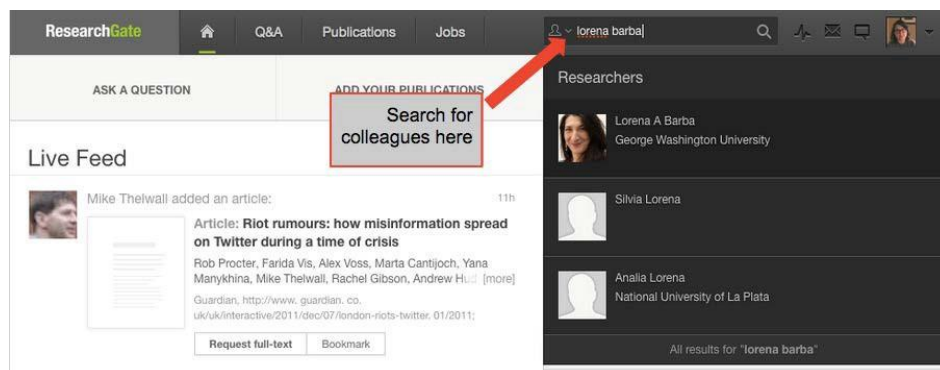
Go ahead and sign up, setup your account (remember to add detailed affiliation information and a photo), and add a publication or two. Got your basic profile up and running? Great! Let's drill down into those three unique features of ResearchGate that you're going to explore for today's Challenge.

Find other researchers & publications

Finding other researchers and publications on ResearchGate works a bit differently than on Academia.edu. Rather than allow you to specify "research interests" and find other researchers that way, ResearchGate automatically creates a network for you based on who you've cited, who you follow and what discipline you selected when setting up your profile.

So, key to creating a robust network is uploading papers with citations to be text-mined, and searching for and following other researchers in your field.

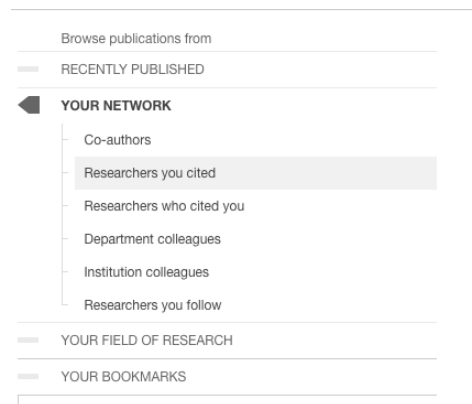
Searching for other researchers in your field is easy: use the search bar at the top of the screen and type in your colleague's name. If they're on the site, they'll appear in the dynamic search results, as we see below for Lorena Barba:



Click on your colleague's name in the search results to be taken to their profile, where you can explore their publications, co-authors, and so on, and also follow them to receive updates.

ResearchGate also text-mines the publications you've uploaded to find out who you've cited. Using that information, they add both researchers you've cited and those who have cited you to your network. Your network also includes colleagues from your department and institution.

To explore your network, click the "Publications" tab at the top of your screen to begin exploring the publications that are in your network. You can browse the most recent publications in your area of interest, your network, and so on, using the navigation bar seen here:



If you find an interesting publication, you can click the **paper title** to read the paper or click on the **author's name** to be taken to their profile. And on the author's profile, you can explore their other publications or choose to follow them, making adding a new colleague to your network a snap.

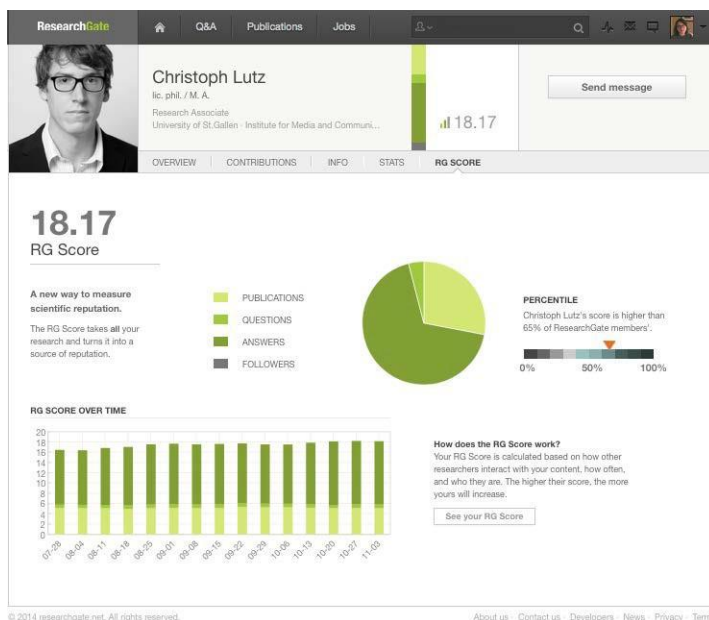
A screenshot of the "RESEARCHERS YOU CITED" section on ResearchGate. It displays a profile card for Richard A. Galbraith, including his photo and a link to his profile. To the right of the profile card is a list of publications. The first publication is titled "Engaging basic scientists in translational research: identifying opportunities, overcoming obstacles." and lists several co-authors. Below the title is a small thumbnail of the paper's cover. To the right of the title is a link to "Show abstract". Below the title is the source information: "Journal of Translational Medicine 04/2012; 10:72. · 3.46 Impact Factor". At the bottom of the publication card are three buttons: "Download", "Bookmark", and "Share".

Click to go to author profile, where you can follow them and read their other publications

Click to go to publication page, where you can read the full-text & bookmark the paper

ResearchGate Score & Stats

If you're into metrics, the ResearchGate score and stats offer lots to explore. The **ResearchGate score** is an indicator of your popularity and engagement on the site: the more publications and followers you have, plus the more questions you ask and answer, all add up to your score. Check out Christoph Lutz's ResearchGate score:



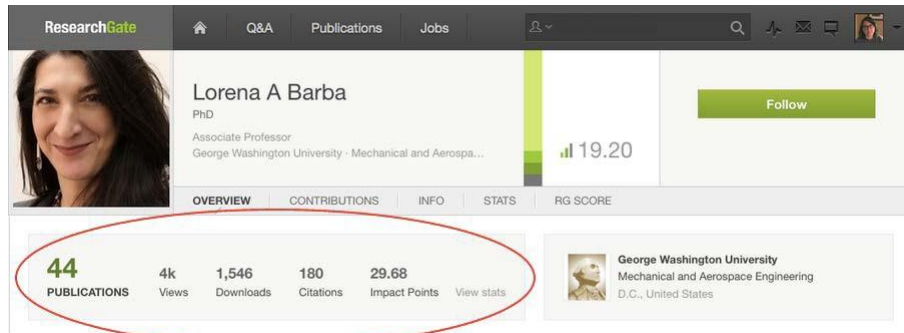
ResearchGate also helpfully provides a percentile (seen above on the right-hand side), so you know how a score stacks up against other users on the site. The score isn't normalized by field, though, so beware that using the score to compare yourself to others isn't recommended.

Some other downsides to be aware of: ResearchGate scores don't take into account whether [you are first author on a paper](#), they [weigh site participation much more highly than other \(more important\) indicators of your scientific prowess](#), and [don't reflect the reality of who's a high-impact scientist in many fields](#). So, caveat emptor.

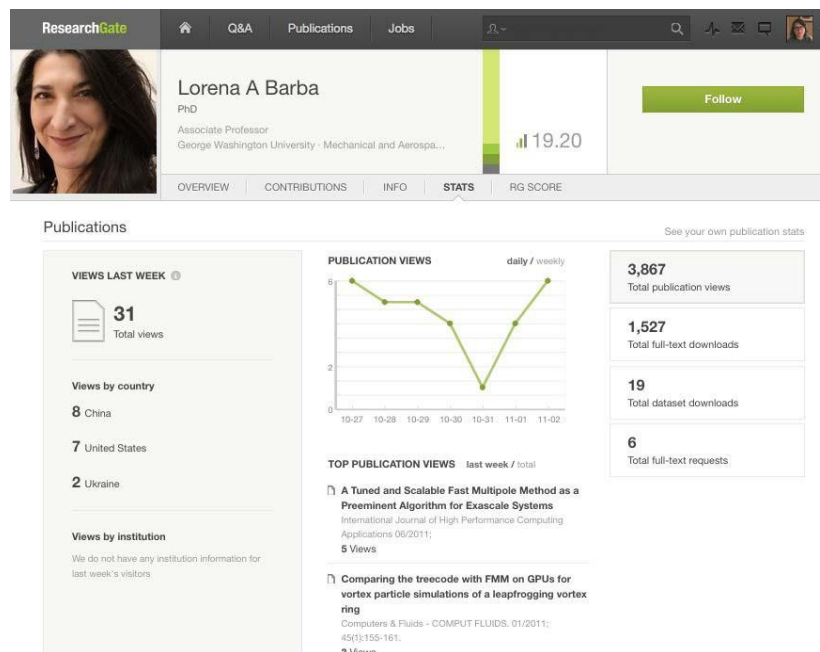
All that said, ResearchGate scores are fun to play around with and explore. Just be sure not to take them too seriously.

The **ResearchGate stats** are also illuminating: they tell you how often your publications have been viewed and cited on ResearchGate (recently and over time), what your top publications are, and the popularity of your profile and any questions you may have asked on the site's Q&A section.

On your profile page, you'll see a summary of your stats:



If you click on those stats, you'll be taken to your stats page, which breaks down all of your metrics with simple visualizations:



A caveat: like Academia.edu stats, ResearchGate stats are only for content hosted on ResearchGate, so it can't tell you much about readership or citations of your work that's hosted on other platforms. And since it's likely that your entire field isn't active on ResearchGate that means ResearchGate stats aren't representative of your full impact.

Q&A

Now that we've made some passive connections by following other researchers, let's build some relationships by contributing to the **Q&A** section of the site.

On the Q&A section, anyone can pose a question, and if it's related to your area of expertise, ResearchGate will give you the opportunity to answer. We'll talk more about the benefits of participating in the Q&A section of the site in the coming days, but basically it's a good opportunity to help other researchers and get your name out there.

Click on "Q&A" at the top of your screen and explore the various questions that have been posed in your discipline in recent weeks. You can also search for other topics, and pose questions yourself.

Two more cool ResearchGate features worth mentioning: [they mint DOIs](#), meaning that if you need a permanent identifier for an unpublished work, you can get one for free (though keep in mind that [they haven't announced a preservation plan](#), meaning their DOIs might be less stable over time than DOIs issued by a CLOCKSS-backed repository like Figshare). And you can also request Open Reviews of your work, which allows anyone on ResearchGate who's in your area of expertise to give you feedback--a useful mechanism for inviting others to read your paper. It's a feature that hasn't seen much uptake, but is full of possibilities in terms of publicizing your work.

Limitations

Several readers have pointed out that Academia.edu and ResearchGate are information silos--you put information and effort into the site, and can't easily extract and reuse it later. And they're absolutely correct. That's a big downside of these services and a great reason to check out open alternatives like PeerLibrary, ORCID, and Impactstory (more on the latter two services in the days to come).

Some other drawbacks to both Academia.edu and ResearchGate: they're both for-profit, venture capital funded platforms, meaning that their responsibility isn't to academics but to investors. And sure, they're both free, which seems like an advantage until you remember that it means that [you are the product, not the customer](#).

One solution to these drawbacks is to limit the amount of time you spend adding new content to your profiles on these sites, and instead use them as a kind of "landing page" that can simply help others find you and your three or four most important publications. Even if you don't have all your publications on either site, their social networking features are still useful to make connections and increase readership for your most important work.

Make LinkedIn Work for your Research

Many academics used LinkedIn “just in case someone contacts them.” Our job today is to make your LinkedIn profile great enough that others will be *eager to contact you*. We’re also going to build out your network a bit, so others can see the high profile work you’ve done.

For today’s challenge, we’re going to:

- Highlight your best work
- Connect with other researchers
- Create a profile that presents the best version of you and also doesn’t need a lot of regular maintenance.

Step 1: Create a solid, low-maintenance profile

You want to create a profile that presents the very best version of you, and also doesn’t need a lot of regular maintenance. (Who has time for that?) You’ll do this by writing a headline and summary that makes it clear in general terms why you’re a smart and talented researcher and choosing a profile photo that’s both professional and inviting.

Make yourself memorable with a good headline

LinkedIn includes a short text blurb next to each person’s name in search results. They call this your “Headline,” and just like a newspaper headline, it’s meant to stimulate enough interest to make the reader want more.

Here are some keys to writing a great LinkedIn headline:

1. **Describe yourself with the right words:** Brainstorm a few keywords that are relevant to the field you’re targeting. Spend a few minutes searching for others in your field, and borrowing from keywords found in their profiles and Headlines. For instance, check out [Arianna C’s](#) Headline: “Conceptual Modeling, Facilitation, Research Management, Research Networking and Matching”. Right away, the viewer knows what Arianna is an expert at. Your headline should do the same.
2. **Be succinct:** Never use two words when one will do. (Hard for academics, I know. ☺) [Barbara K.](#), who works in biotech, has a great Headline that follows this rule: “Microbiologist with R & D experience.”
3. **Show your expert status:** What makes you the chemical engineer/genomics researcher/neuroscientist? Do you put in the most hours, score the biggest grants, or get the best instructor evaluations from students? This is your value proposition—what makes you great. Those with less experience like recent graduates can supplement this section by showing their passion for a topic. (I.e., “Computer scientist with a passion for undergraduate education.”)

4. **Use a tried and true formula to writing your headline:** 3 keywords + 1 value proposition = Headline success, according to career coach [Diana YK Chan](#). So what does that look like? Taking the keywords from (1) and value proposition from (3) above, we can create a Headline that reads, “Computer scientist with a passion for undergraduate education and experience in conceptual modeling and research management.” Cool, huh?

Well-written headlines are also key to making you more findable online—important for those of us who need disambiguation from similarly named researchers beyond [ORCID](#).

Make yourself approachable with the right photo

The next step to making yourself memorable is to get a good photo on your profile. Here are three tips to remember:

- **[Don't tilt your head](#)**. Lots of folks, especially women, do this in photos look friteondlier, but it ends up making you look unassertive instead. Be confident.
- **Turn your shoulders**; the [straight-on post yells “mug shot.”](#)
- **Try posting an action shot**, emphasizing for the viewer what you're good public sapt:eaking, computer programming, and so on.

Craft a compelling summary section

Your Summary is an opportunity to provide a 50,000-foot view into your career and studies to date. Don't just use this section to repeat information found elsewhere on your profile. Instead, write a short narrative of your professional life and career aspirations, using some of the keywords left over from writing your Headline. When writing your Summary, aim to be specific and make your value clear.

Don't use technical jargon, but do provide concrete details about your research and why it matters. Make yourself a person, not just another name in a discipline. Describe what you've done and why it matters.

Here's a great example: [Elizabeth Iorns](#), breast cancer researcher and entrepreneur, explains to profile viewers that:

“Based on her own experiences as a young investigator seeking expert collaborations, Dr. Iorns co-founded Science Exchange. In 2012, after recognizing the need to create a positive incentive system that rewards independent validation of results, Dr. Iorns created the Reproducibility Initiative.”

Right there is specific proof that she gets stuff done: she's created solutions in response to service gaps for scientists. Impressive!

Step 2: Highlight your best work

Next, let's prepare for making a good impression on your LinkedIn network by highlighting the work that's most important to you. And you're going to get others to notice it by making sure some of it's eye-catching.

Brag about your best publications and awards

Consider your publications and awards the vegetables—the stuff you really want to be consumed. You're going to make others notice them by listing them alongside the sweets—your eye-catching content.

You'll want to highlight only your best publications (especially those where you're a lead author) and most prestigious awards (i.e., skip the \$500 undergraduate scholarship from your local Elks club). List no more than 5 total.

Here's how to add them: in Edit Profile mode, you'll see a "Recommended for you" panel to the right of your profile photo and header section. Click the "Publications" tile to add that section to your profile.

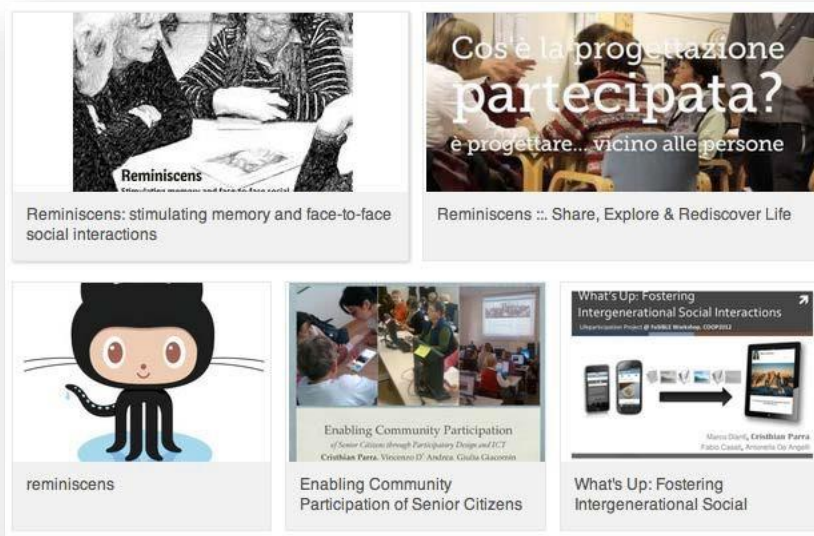
On the Publications section, you'll need to manually add publication details. Here are the most important details to include:

- Title (this one's a no-brainer)
- Publication URL (so others can click through to read your work)
- Description (include your abstract in this space)

You can also add your co-authors, if they're on LinkedIn and you're already connected.

Now that your articles are added, drag the Publications section to appear just above or below any eye-catching content on your profile.

Add some eye-catching content



With a little ingenuity you can make LinkedIn pretty good for showcasing what scientists have a lot of: posters, slide decks, and figures for manuscripts.

If you've ever given a talk at a conference, or submitted a figure with a manuscript for publication, you can upload it here, giving viewers a better taste of your work.

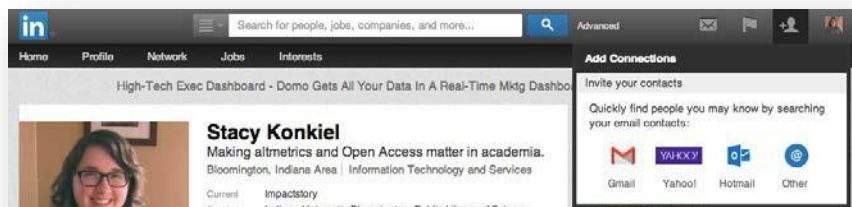
Neuroscientist [Bradley Voytek](#) has added a Wow Factor to his profile with a link to a TEDx talk he gave on his research. Pharmacology professor [Ramy Aziz](#) showcases his best conference talks using links to Slideshare slide decks. And GitHub repositories make an appearance alongside slide decks on postdoc [Cristhian Parra](#)'s profile (pictured above).

You too can upload links to your best—and most visually stimulating—work for a slick-looking profile that sets you apart from others. Here's how: add links, photos, slideshows, and videos directly to your profile using the Upload icon on your profile's Summary and Experience sections.

One caveat to adding content to your profile: LinkedIn does not offer analytics that show you how often your work is viewed or downloaded on the site. So, you'll be unable to say with certainty what LinkedIn has done for your readership and so on, but that's okay: LinkedIn is more about relationships and the boost they'll give your reputation, instead. Read on.

Step 3: Connect with other researchers

Connecting with other researchers on LinkedIn is just one more way to build an audience for your research. Connections help you maintain relationships with past and current colleagues, who are likely interested in the work you're doing and want to read about it.



It's surprisingly easy to find people you already know and add them to your network on LinkedIn.

Use the Add Connections tab in the top right corner of your profile to connect LinkedIn to your email account.

LinkedIn then suggests Connections based on your contacts. An important rule to follow for LinkedIn is to only select Connections you actually know and feel comfortable asking to keep in touch (former collaborators, co-workers, and friends are good choices).

When Connecting, it's a nice touch to send a message saying hello. Networking is [all about building meaningful relationships](#), not how many people you have in your virtual Rolodex.

Limitations

LinkedIn is a decent tool for professional visibility, but it's not without its headaches. Chief among them is that it's yet another information silo. (And that's why you're setting up a profile that's going to be easy to maintain, so you don't have to update it but once a year.) LinkedIn's also overzealous with their notification emails, sending more in a month than most of us would care to receive in a year. Luckily, they're easy to turn off; [check out this blog post for a short-and-sweet how-to](#).

Add to your best work

First things first: get at least three of your most important publications onto your profile, add some eye-catching content, then rearrange your profile sections so

your Publications get prime real estate next to the most visually-stimulating pieces on your profile.

Make yourself more “googleable”

Next, you need to make it easy for others to view your profile. What good is a killer LinkedIn profile if no one can find it, or if your profile is so locked down they can only see your name?

Check your “public profile” settings (go to Privacy & Settings > Edit your public profile) to make sure people can see what you want them to. What might others want to see? Your past experience, summary, and education, for starters; also include your best publications.

Next, double-check your settings by signing out of LinkedIn completely and searching for yourself on both LinkedIn and Google.

Expand your network

Finally, let’s expand your network by requesting an introduction to a new contact. If done correctly, it can get your name recognized with important researchers.

Here’s an example of how that would work: I’m not currently Connected to genomics researcher Mike Eisen on LinkedIn, but let’s say I want to collaborate with him to do some research on a great idea I have.

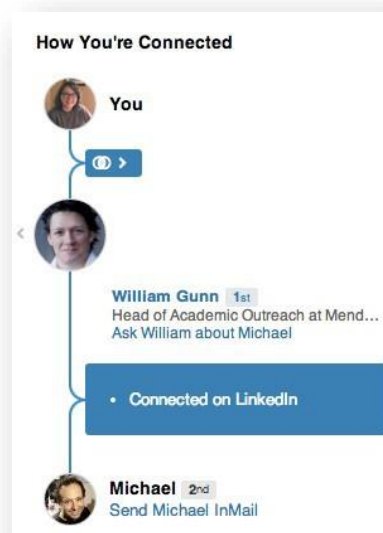
The first thing I need to do to connect with him is find a contact that we have in common.

So, I visit Mike’s profile. On the left-hand side is a “How You’re Connected” graphic. I can scroll through the list of contacts we have in common to find a suitable middleman—Mendeley’s William Gunn.

Next, I would click on the “Ask William about Mike” link. In the dialog box that appears, I’d write my request for an introduction and send it to William. The request should follow three key rules:

Be specific

William might take 10 minutes out of his day to write a recommendation for me, so I shouldn’t waste his time. That means telling him exactly why I want to meet Mike: what Mike does that interests me (he’s a genomics researcher), and what I’m looking to get out of an introduction (an opportunity to tell him about my great research idea: widgets for genomics researchers).



Include a “pitch” as to why an introduction would be valuable

Likewise, I should make it clear what Mike would get out of meeting me. What do I bring to the table? In this case, it'd be the chance to learn about a well-received new widget, and a future NSF grant opportunity.

Show appreciation, and also provide William with an “easy out”

William's time is valuable, so I should make it clear that I'm thankful that he's considering writing an Introduction. A good way to do that in addition to saying thanks is to give him a way to beg off without feeling too guilty.

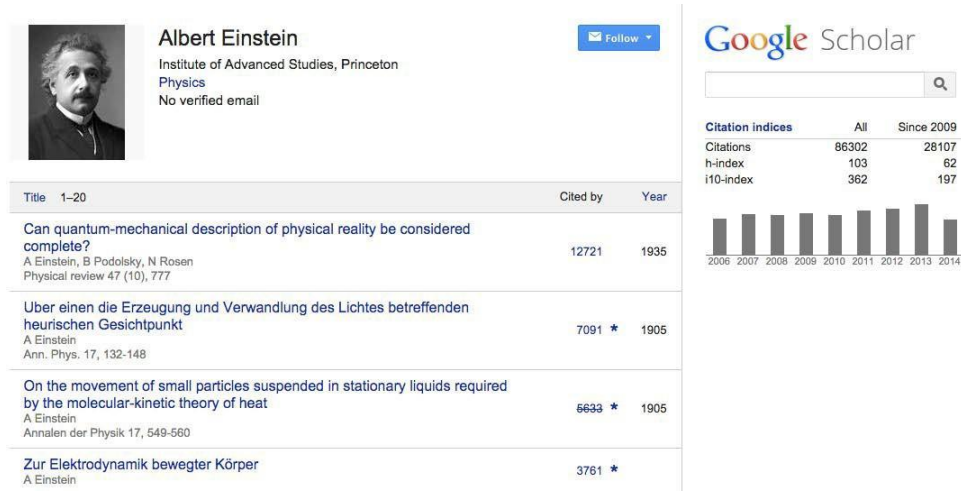
Two additional rules for special scenarios are: 1) If we didn't know each other well, I'd want to remind William how we met, and 2) If William does introduce Mike and I, I should follow up with an update and thanks.

An example introduction request can be found [on this blog post](#).

One final note: keep your requests for introductions to “2nd degree connections”—that is, friends of friends—because your chances of getting a meaningful introduction to a stranger through a friend of a friend of a friend [depends on too many variables to be successful](#).

Create a Google Scholar Profile

We've covered two of academia's most popular social networks for the so far. Let's now dig into the research platform that's [most often used](#) by researchers: **Google Scholar**.



Google Scholar is a popular way to showcase your papers and the citations they've received. Google Scholar also calculates a platform-dependent h-index, which many researchers love to track (for better or [for worse](#)).

In today's challenge, we're going to get you onto Google Scholar, so you can up your scholarly SEO (aka "googleability"), more easily share your publications with new readers, and discover new citations to your work.

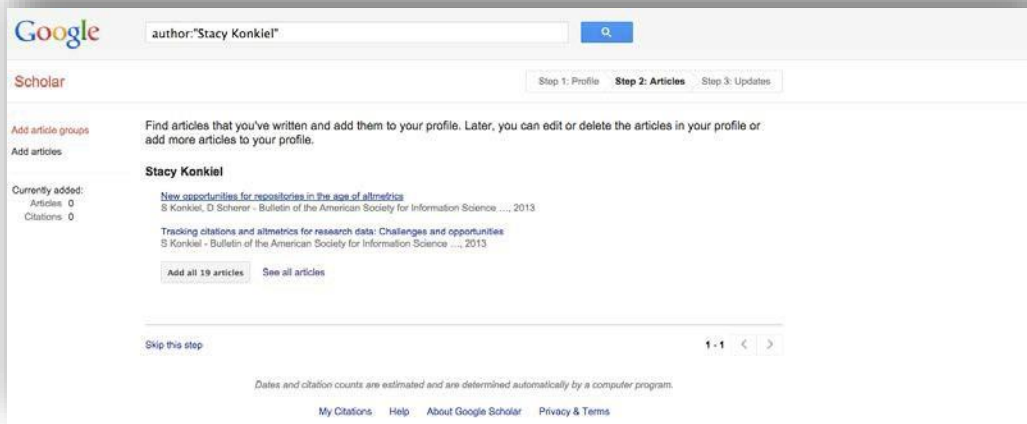
Step 1: Create your basic profile

Log on to scholar.google.com and click the "My Citations" link at the top of the page to get your account setup started.

On the first screen, add your affiliation information and university email address, so Google Scholar can confirm your account. Add keywords that are relevant to your research interests, so others can find you when browsing a subject area. Provide a link to your university homepage, if you have one.

Click "Next Step," and--that's it! Your basic profile is done. Now, let's add some publications to it.

Step 2: Add publications

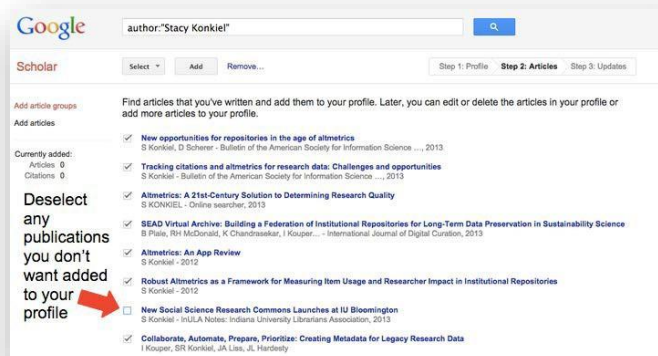


Google has likely already been indexing your work for some time now as part of their mission as a scholarly search engine. So, this step is pretty easy, compared to what it takes to get your work on to Academia.edu and ResearchGate.

Google Scholar will provide you with a list of publications they think belong to you. You'll need to read through the list of publications that it suggests as yours and select which ones you want to add to your profile.

Beware--if you have a common name, it's likely there's some publications in this list that don't belong to you. And there's also possibly content that you don't want on your profile because it's not a scholarly article, or is not representative of your current research path, and so on.

Read through the publications list and deselect any that you do not want to add to your profile (like the below newsletter item that Google Scholar thinks is a scholarly article). Then click the grey "Add" button at the top of your profile.



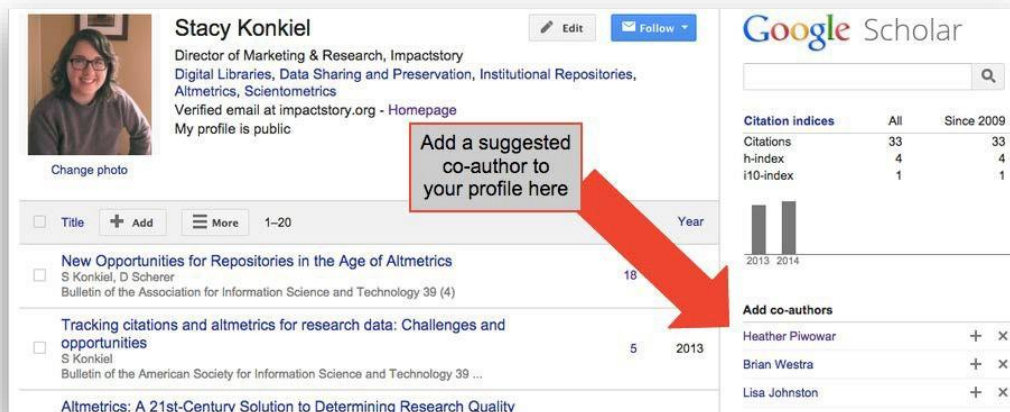
Next, confirm you want Google to automatically add new publications to your profile in the future. If you've got a very common name, note that this might add publications you didn't author to your profile. But if you're a prolific author, it can be worth it for the time it saves you approving new articles every month.

Your profile is now almost complete! Two more steps: add a photo by clicking the "Change Photo" link on your profile homepage, and set your private profile to "Public."

Step 3: Make your profile public

Your profile is private if you've just created it. Change your profile visibility by clicking "Edit" next to "My profile is private" and then selecting "My profile is public" in the drop-down box.

Bonus: Add co-authors



The screenshot shows a Google Scholar profile for Stacy Konkiel. The profile includes a photo, a bio, and a list of publications. A red arrow points from a text box that says "Add a suggested co-author to your profile here" to the "Add co-authors" section on the right. The "Add co-authors" section lists Heather Piwowar, Brian Westra, and Lisa Johnston, each with a plus sign and a minus sign next to it.

Citation indices	All	Since 2009
Citations	33	33
h-index	4	4
i10-index	1	1

Year	2013	2014
Citations	18	5

Add co-authors		
Heather Piwowar	+	-
Brian Westra	+	-
Lisa Johnston	+	-

While your profile is technically complete, you'll want to take advantage of Google Scholar's built-in co-authorship network. Adding co-authors is a good way to let others know you're now on Google Scholar, and will be useful later on in the Challenge, when we set up automatic alerts that can help you stay on top of new research in your field.

To add a suggested co-author, find the "Add Co-authors" section on the top right-hand section of your profile, and then click the plus-sign next to each co-author you want to add.

That's it! Now you've got a Google Scholar profile that helps you track when your work has been cited both in the peer-reviewed literature and, and is yet another scholarly landing page that'll connect others with your publications. The best part? Google Scholar's pretty good at automatically adding new stuff to your profile, meaning you won't have to do a lot of work to keep it up.

Limitations

Dirty data in the form of incorrect publications isn't the only limitation of Google Scholar you should be aware of. The [quality of Google Scholar citations has also been questioned](#), because they're different from what scholars have traditionally considered to be a citation worth counting: a citation in the peer-reviewed literature.

Google Scholar counts citations from pretty much anywhere they can find them. That means their citation count often includes citations from online undergraduate papers, slides, white papers and similar sources. Because of this, Google scholar citation counts are [much higher than those from competitors like Scopus and Web of Science](#).

That can be a good thing. But you can also argue it's ["inflating" citation counts unfairly](#). It also makes Google Scholar's citation counts quite susceptible to [gaming techniques](#) like [using fake publications to fraudulently raise the numbers](#). We've not heard many evaluators complaining about these issues so far, but it's good to be aware of.

Google Scholar also shares a limitation with [ResearchGate and Academia.edu](#): it's [somewhat of an information silo](#). You cannot export your citation data, meaning that even if you were to amass very impressive citation statistics on the platform, the only way to get them onto your website, CV, or an annual report is to *copy and paste them*--way too much tedium for most scientists to endure. Their siloed approach to platform building definitely contributes to researchers' [profile fatigue](#).

Its final major limitation? There's no telling if Google Scholar will be around tomorrow. Remember Google Reader? [Google has a history of killing beloved products when the bottom line is in question](#). It's not exaggerating to say that Google Scholar Profiles could literally go away at any moment.

That said, the benefits of the platform outweigh the downsides for many. And we're going to give you a way to beat part of the "information silo" problem in today's homework.

Homework

Google Scholar can only automate so much. To fully complete your Google Scholar profile, let's manually add any missing articles. And let's also teach you how to export your publication information from Google Scholar, because you'll want to reuse it on other platforms.

1. Add missing articles

You might have an article or two that Google Scholar didn't automatically add to your profile. If that's the case, you'll need to add it manually.