

FACILITATING COLLABORATION:  
EXPLORING A SOCIO-TECHNICAL APPROACH TO  
THE DESIGN OF A COLLABORATORY FOR  
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

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The thesis explores the potential of one way of facilitating and stimulating collaboration in Library and Information Science (LIS), through a specific scientific collaboration activity: creating, sharing and reusing data collection instruments, such as interview guides, questionnaires, and observation protocols. The four studies reported in the thesis can be read as a linear narrative, each study building on the previous and contributing to the following ones. Together the four studies describe the process exploring social and contextual aspects of LIS; developing requirements and designing a working prototype collaboratory; and evaluating how the prototype collaboratory was perceived by LIS professionals.

Overall, the results show that whereas the benefits of an LIS collaboratory reported by the study participants focused on the greater good for LIS, the challenges reported focused on the individuals' perspectives. Hence, a tension exists between supporting the greater good, and challenges for individuals concerning sharing and reusing data collection instruments in an LIS collaboratory. The thesis emphasizes the implications for the LIS discipline when new ways of working with data collection instruments would be introduced; the implications of addressing needs of a diverse target audience; and the implications for further design iterations of an LIS collaboratory, including rewarding contributions, and ensuring quality content in a collaboratory.

**Keywords:** scientific collaboration; collaboration; collaboratories; information sharing; socio-technical design; library and information science; LIS; think aloud methods; prototyping; interaction design; computer supported cooperative work; CSCW; social actors