

(last updated April 2022)

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE A. Creating a robust LiDA website, along with a comprehensive communication plan

BRIEF DESCRIPTION - FROM THE 2019 LiDA STRATEGIC PLAN:

Our goals of growing a collaborative LiDA Community (Goal #4), exploring new digitally-enhanced ways to disseminate lessons learned (Goal #2), and increasing the LiDA Center's visibility (Goal #3), all require the development and implementation of a robust communication plan for the LiDA Center. At the core of this plan is the development of an interactive and vibrant website that will provide online spaces to exchange information, lessons learned, opportunities and resources. To be effective, though, this website needs to be accompanied by a thoughtful and comprehensive plan about how to leverage social media and other communication vehicles so as to reach the widest possible audience.

(NOTE: hereafter, * indicates LiDA staff, and ** indicates LiDA Community members)

LiDA Communication Plan

The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed our original plan to hire a consultant to help us develop a comprehensive and strategic communication plan for the LiDA Center - and we still believe we need expert guidance to better leverage the power of online communication to increase the impact of our work.

However, in the meantime we have been able to make good progress in developing a robust and innovative LiDA website as a vehicle not only to describe what the LiDA Center does, but more importantly to provide opportunities for the larger LiDA Community to share information, resources and lessons learned. We have also begun to make better use of social media - especially Twitter - to "push" information out so as to make the LiDA Community aware of resources and events of potential interest.

LiDA website

The structure of our LiDA website was mainly designed by *Borasi in collaboration with Mason Digital in early 2019, and launched in May 2019 - but it will continue to be a "work in progress" as we continue not only to add content to it, but also to explore more effective ways to leverage this medium so as to further our mission.

From the beginning, we aimed to make our website more than a repository of information about the LiDA Center - although we did also pay careful attention to how to best include rich content about our [mission](#) and [strategic plan](#), as well as key [initiatives](#), [programs](#) and [services](#). Our main additional goals can be articulated as using our website as:

- *A vehicle for the LiDA Community to learn from each other and make connections by sharing information and findings:* From its initial design, the LiDA website has purposefully included a [Shared Resources](#) section, with multiple components to allow the [LiDA Community](#) to share different kinds of information and findings. Efforts in this direction have included most notably:

- Providing a space for LiDA Community member to list key [projects](#) they are engaging in, along with selected information - so people with similar interests may learn about what other people are doing and possibly make connections
- Providing a space for LiDA Community member to share [results of their work](#) - especially if that work has not (yet) been published, or can be easily accessed online

While we are happy we have made a concrete start towards this goal, we have still to figure out how to maintain this information up to date in an effective manner. We also feel that more needs to be done to ensure that the LiDA Community is aware of and benefits from this information. Moving forward, we want to figure out better ways to display information and keep it updated, as well as way to use social media to “push out” some of this information, as well as recent updates.

- *An opportunity to experiment with innovative ways to use the LiDA website as an online platform for learning:* This is another area that has been part of our initial design, although we have continued to try out new things since then. Interesting attempts to date include:
 - Providing an illustration, using the topic of [Online Teacher Identity](#), of how an expert could provide an introduction to a LiDA topic by providing information at different levels of depth that may be most appropriate to different audiences, leveraging the power of multi-media and hyperlinked online documents; surprisingly, this page has shown more traffic than expected, suggesting the value to add more entries of this kind.
 - Two different examples of “[LiDA eModules](#)” - that is, an organized set of online resources that we hope interested educators will be able to use to learn about a topic on their own time and pace, also making decisions about what they may want to use and how.
 - The artifacts we posted from the [LiDA Colloquium](#) sessions (starting with Fall 2020), as a way to make at least some of the information shared in these events accessible to everyone, anywhere and at any time.

We want to continue to try out new things moving forward, also making more purposeful efforts to “advertise” these learning opportunities within the LiDA Community and beyond.

As it is three years since the LiDA website was launched, we believe it is time for a thorough review and addition of some new pages and functionalities - once we sufficiently recover from the pandemic!

Use of social media

Other uses of social media we have experimented with so far include:

- *Using our **Twitter** account as a way to “push out” information about valuable resources during the pandemic:* As the pandemic shut down schools and educators and parents around the globe grappled with remote instruction, **Dang and *Lammers began sharing “Daily Dose” tweets each weekday to offer virtual resources that might be useful during this crisis. *Borys continued this practice throughout most of the pandemic.
- *Using a blog to tell stories about a unique LiDA research experience:* During her Fulbright U.S. Scholar grant period, *Lammers kept a [blog](#) to document her experiences while in Indonesia. Entries tell stories about data collection for her study

of secondary students' digital literacies, the presentations that she and Dr. Puji Astuti (W PhD '16) gave to educators around the country, and the faculty writing camps she facilitated at her host institution.

- *Leveraging LiDA staff's established LinkedIn presence:* As *Miller has a well established following for his LinkedIn account (23,770 followers as of May 2021!), he has also strategically posted announcements about LiDA events and other information to increase their visibility.