



**The Power of Impact Statements: What, Why, Who and HOW
Special Topics Session**

Coordinator

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Panelists

Jane Hegland, South Dakota State University; Sonali Diddi, Colorado State University; Elena Karpova, Iowa State University; Melody Lehew, Kansas State University; Srikantsharma Manchiraju, Florida State University; Elizabeth Bye, University of Minnesota; Scarlett Wesley, University of Kentucky; JuanJuan Wu, University of Minnesota; Cynthia Jasper, University of Wisconsin; Jill Lee, Mississippi State University; Ting Chi, Washington State University

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The session consisted of a panel presentation, open discussion, and attendee participation. Panel members presented the what, why, who, and how of impact statements. ITAA members often find there are various audiences that need to understand the impact we make on society and industry. To address this, NCCC065 members presented the issue, provided important strategies on the how-to, provided open discussion forum, and direct a hands-on exercise so that attendees could leave the session with a first draft of an impact statement applicable to their situation.

The session had four main purposes: (1) to establish awareness and understanding of impact statements and their application in academics, (2) to explore the reasons why impact statements should be a consistent practice implemented throughout our career, (3) to investigate who the various audiences are, and (4) to highlight how powerful impact statements are written for stakeholders. Attendees were guided through several scenarios and exercises to practice formulating precise and powerful impact statements as a group. The session ended with an opportunity for each of the attendees to write individual impact statements that contain the necessary components of a powerful impact statement.

Benefit of Session to Members:

Clothing and textile programs are facing numerous challenges and threats including reorganization, lack of campus support, limited funding sources, and even demise (Hawley & Bye, 2015). One strategy for mitigating these challenges is to be able to communicate clearly to

our stakeholders the impact of our work. This special topics session will inform ITAA members how to write powerful impact statements, designed for diverse stakeholders, with clear communication of the outcomes and benefits of our work to individuals, communities, and industry.

In the Fall 2016 annual meeting, NCCC065 members participated in a special workshop by Sara Delheimer, Impact Writer for *Impact Writing Initiative* sponsored by Multistate Research Projects for land grant universities. Members of NCCC065 concluded that the information gleaned from the workshop was highly useful and would benefit other ITAA members. We have adapted that workshop for delivery to the general ITAA membership. Impact statements demonstrate to our stakeholders how our work makes a difference in the lives of individuals, communities, policy, and funding agencies. In the process of writing impact statements, we also can reflect on ways to improve our work, demonstrate the differences we have made in society, improve the visibility of our programs, generate support, build a better understanding of our programs, and discover new issues/initiatives/and themes for future work. Documenting the results of our efforts is also increasingly important for our stakeholders.

References:

Hawley, J. M. and Bye, E. (2015, January). The transformative potential of risk-taking in textile and apparel programs. In J. Ha-Brookshire and K. LaBat (Eds.), *Envisioning Textile and Apparel Research Education for the 21st Century*. Monograph #11 published by the International Textile and Apparel Association.