Introduction

My name is Emily Kingsland and I'm an associate librarian at McGill University, located in Montréal, Québec, Canada. I attended and presented at the International Conference on Economics and Business Information (INCONECSS), held from May 15 to 16, 2025, in Berlin, thanks to a generous grant from BI-International. The central theme of the conference was "Research Support in an Age of AI."

What made INCONECSS particularly unique was its international scope. The conference served as a platform for: sharing best practices from diverse contexts; discussion on emerging challenges and opportunities; and exchanging perspectives on AI's role in academic libraries and research environments. The conference brought together librarians, researchers, and information professionals to explore how AI is transforming scholarly communication, data services, and the skillsets required to support research in the digital age.

My presentation

My presentation was titled "Press play, press on: Creating videos and synthesizing success." I shared my experience developing scalable, video-based instruction to support systematic and scoping reviews in the social sciences, economics, and business.

Systematic reviews, once primarily used in health sciences, have gained traction across disciplines like economics and management. Over the past decade, I have seen a dramatic rise in consultations related to knowledge synthesis at McGill. A common challenge has been the time-intensive nature of explaining the methodology.

To address this, I created a five-part instructional video series which offers asynchronous, accessible training for graduate students and researchers. It covers:

1. Review types (systematic, scoping, meta-analysis)
2. Sensitivity vs. precision
3. Planning and protocol development
4. Search strategies and Covidence demos
5. Data synthesis and reporting

Following my participation in the Evidence Synthesis Institute of Canada, I revised the series – which I had originally created in 2019 – to reflect:

- New institutional access to Covidence
- Interactive quizzes to reinforce learning

- Demonstrations of exporting data to tools like Zotero

- Clarifications on meta-analysis, responding to user demand

- Additional resources, including MOOCs and decision trees

The video series has significantly improved the sustainability of my workload, reducing repetitive instruction and enabling deeper research support. It also fosters collaboration and enhances the quality of student and faculty research. The modular format allows for ongoing updates and adaptability.

Conference highlights

"From strategy to practice: The role of AI literacy in the future of libraries," presented by Dr. Leo Lo

One highlight of the conference was the keynote presentation by Dr. Leo Lo, Dean and Professor of the College of University Libraries & Learning Sciences at the University of New Mexico. In his keynote, Dr. Lo emphasized the critical importance of developing AI literacy within the library profession to prepare for a rapidly evolving technological landscape. He began by challenging common perceptions of AI, noting that AI does not create art in the traditional sense, but rather remixes existing content, raising questions about originality and plagiarism.

Dr. Lo shared insights from his own AI literacy program, which is grounded in adult learning principles—designed to be self-paced and flexible to accommodate diverse learning needs. He highlighted practical applications of AI in libraries, such as metadata creation and the development of Open Educational Resources (OER), showcasing how AI can enhance efficiency and innovation in these areas.

Interestingly, Dr. Lo noted that his institution has not implemented a formal AI policy, citing the rapid pace of change in the field. Instead, they offer guidance and suggested syllabus language to help educators navigate AI use responsibly without locking into rigid frameworks.

Overall, Lo's talk underscored the need for adaptive, informed, and collaborative approaches to AI in libraries, advocating for a balance between strategic vision and practical implementation.

"Open access and AI: What power do authors and their institutions have?" presented by Dave Hansen

Another conference highlight was a presentation by Dave Hansen, Executive Director of Authors Alliance, a nonprofit organization that supports authors who aim to serve the public good by sharing their work widely. In his talk, Hansen explored the intersection

of open access (OA) and AI, focusing on the rights and responsibilities of authors and institutions in the evolving AI landscape.

Hansen highlighted a troubling case reported by *Retraction Watch*, where a study on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy was retracted—not due to flawed research, but because the authors used AI-based text mining on newspaper content without securing the necessary rights. This, he argued, reflects a broader issue: licensed content is often off-limits to AI tools, effectively banning learning from such sources.

He contrasted the European Union's more progressive stance with that of North America. In the EU:

- Text and data mining (TDM) is broadly permitted.

- Scientific research is protected from AI training opt-outs.

- Commercial TDM can be opted out of, but not research-focused uses.

In contrast, the U.S. is mired in over 40 lawsuits concerning whether AI training on copyrighted works qualifies as fair use. Hansen pointed to the Google Books case, which took a decade to resolve, as a cautionary tale about the cost and duration of litigation.

He also warned about the pitfalls of exclusive publishing agreements, especially when OA articles are hosted on platforms like Wiley that restrict data mining despite permissive licenses like CC-BY. If the only accessible version of an article is behind such restrictions, it undermines the very purpose of open access.

Hansen concluded with several calls to action: embrace open licensing models; ensure preservation and discoverability of open copies outside of publisher-controlled platforms; and support authors in negotiating contracts that retain their rights, especially when full OA isn't feasible.

Networking opportunities

Through the generous funding provided by BI-International, I had the valuable opportunity to network with colleagues during the conference. Both the conference sessions and the conference dinner provided meaningful spaces for connecting with international librarians and information professionals. Among the many inspiring conversations, I was especially pleased to form new friendships with Nina Baueregger from the University of Goettingen and Ursula Helmkamp from Dortmund University.

My stay in Berlin

With the support of a BI-International grant, I was able to stay at a hotel in Berlin's central Mitte borough, which provided me with the opportunity to explore some of the

city's most iconic and thought-provoking landmarks, each offering a unique perspective on its rich and complex history.

One of the highlights was the Reichstag Dome, a stunning glass structure atop Germany's parliament building. The panoramic views of the city from the dome were breathtaking, and the architectural symbolism—transparency and openness in government—was deeply moving. The audio guide provided insights into Berlin's past and present, making the experience both visually and intellectually enriching.

I also joined a walking tour of central Berlin, which brought the city's layered history to life. From the Brandenburg Gate to standing atop Hitler's bunker, each stop revealed stories of division, resilience, and reunification. The guide's commentary helped me appreciate how Berlin has transformed itself while preserving the memory of its past.

The Jewish Museum was another powerful experience. Its striking architecture and immersive exhibits offered a profound reflection on Jewish life in Germany, the Holocaust, and the ongoing dialogue around identity and memory. The East Side Gallery, a vibrant stretch of the Berlin Wall covered in murals, stood in stark contrast, celebrating freedom and artistic expression where there was once division.

At the Berlin Wall Memorial, I gained a deeper understanding of the human impact of the Wall. The preserved sections, watchtower, and documentation centre conveyed the stark reality of life in a divided city. Finally, the Museum at the Kulturbrauerei offered a compelling look at everyday life in East Germany, with personal stories and artifacts that made history feel intimate and real.

Each of these sites offered a different lens through which to view Berlin—its scars, its spirit, and its ongoing journey of remembrance and renewal.

Conclusion

Attending the INCONECSS conference was a professionally enriching and personally inspiring experience. The conference's central theme resonated deeply with my current work and aspirations. What stood out most was the international scope of the event. Made possible through funding from BI-International, I had the opportunity not only to attend but also to present my work. Sharing this work with an engaged audience and receiving thoughtful feedback was a highlight of my professional journey.

Beyond the conference, staying in Berlin's Mitte district allowed me to explore the city's rich historical and cultural landscape. Visiting storied landmarks added a reflective dimension to my trip, deepening my appreciation for Berlin's intricate past and dynamic present.

Overall, this experience affirmed the value of my professional contributions, expanded my understanding of global trends in research support, and inspired new ideas for integrating AI and open access principles into my work.