LIASA

2025

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Libraries as Innovation Hubs: **Empowering Communities**

30 SEPTEMBER - 3 OCTOBER

BOARDWALK HOTEL, GOEBERHA

Embedding Evidence Synthesis Support in Health Sciences Research Training: A Case Study from an Academic Library at University of Pretoria

Linda Mbonambi

Acting Library Manager (Health Sciences)

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Background

- Evidence Synthesis Journey: Faculty of Health Sciences
- What is evidence synthesis
- Decision Framework
- Role of Librarians
- Developing a search strategy
- PRISMA
- Lesson learned
- Future directions

Evidence Synthesis Journey@ Faculty of Health Science

Faculty hosts 20 research entities - one of them is Evidence Synthesis Group established: (Librarians + Faculty Team collaboration)

Dedicated website highlights:

- Projects, Publications, Webinars, International Advisory Board Contact details

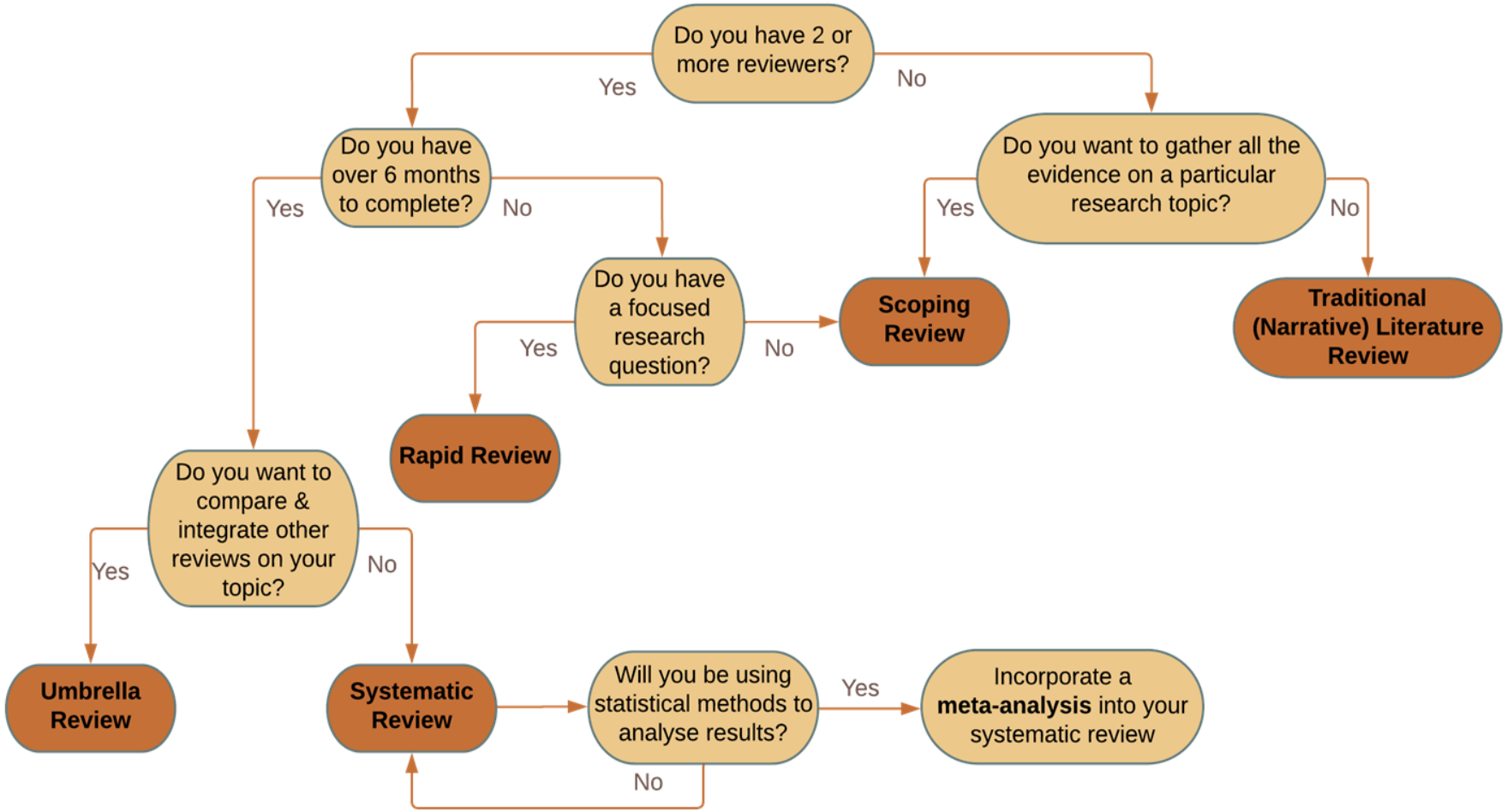
Publications with Librarians as co-authors: Collaboration with Faculty

- 2025 – 5 published, 10 accepted for publications (15)
- 2021-2024 (30 Publications)

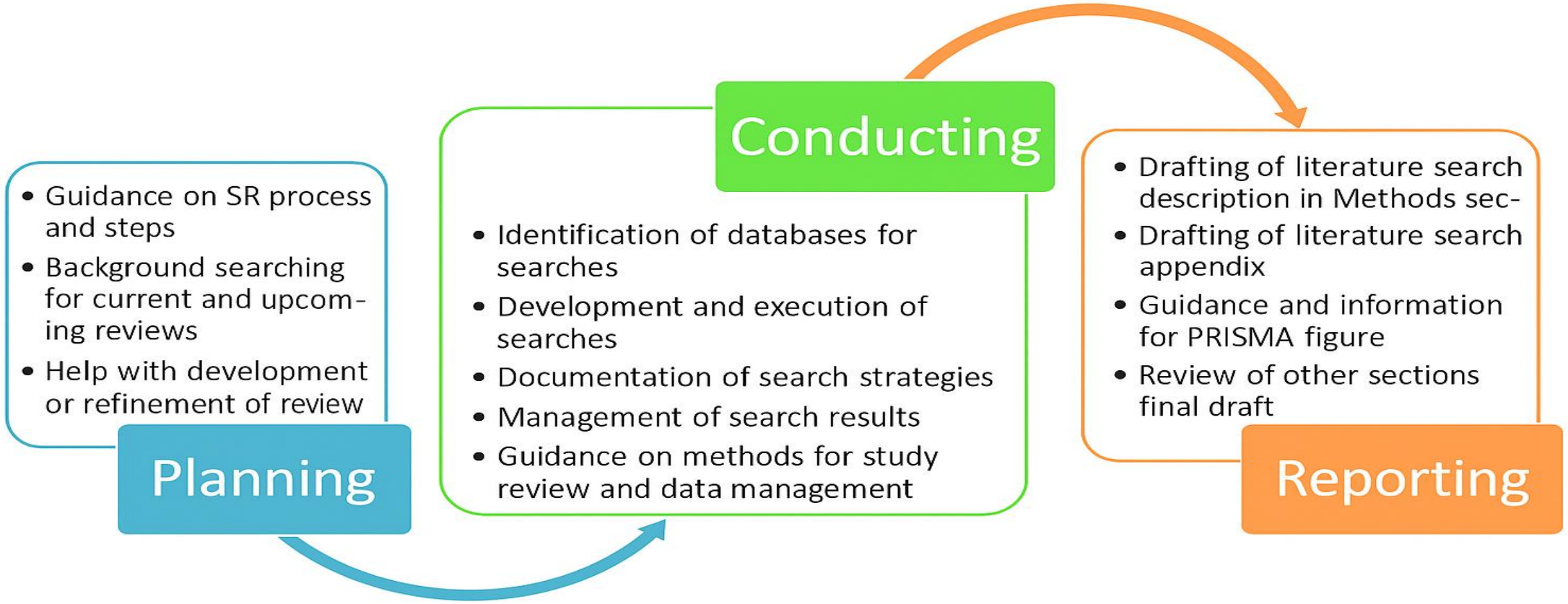
Evidence Synthesis

Evidence synthesis (scoping and systematic reviews) is a transdisciplinary modern method that identifies, selects, and integrates results from multiple sources to highlight knowledge gaps and build an evidence base for best-practice guidance.

Framework for making the right decision



Role of the Librarians in Scoping/Systematic Reviews



EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS TRAINING

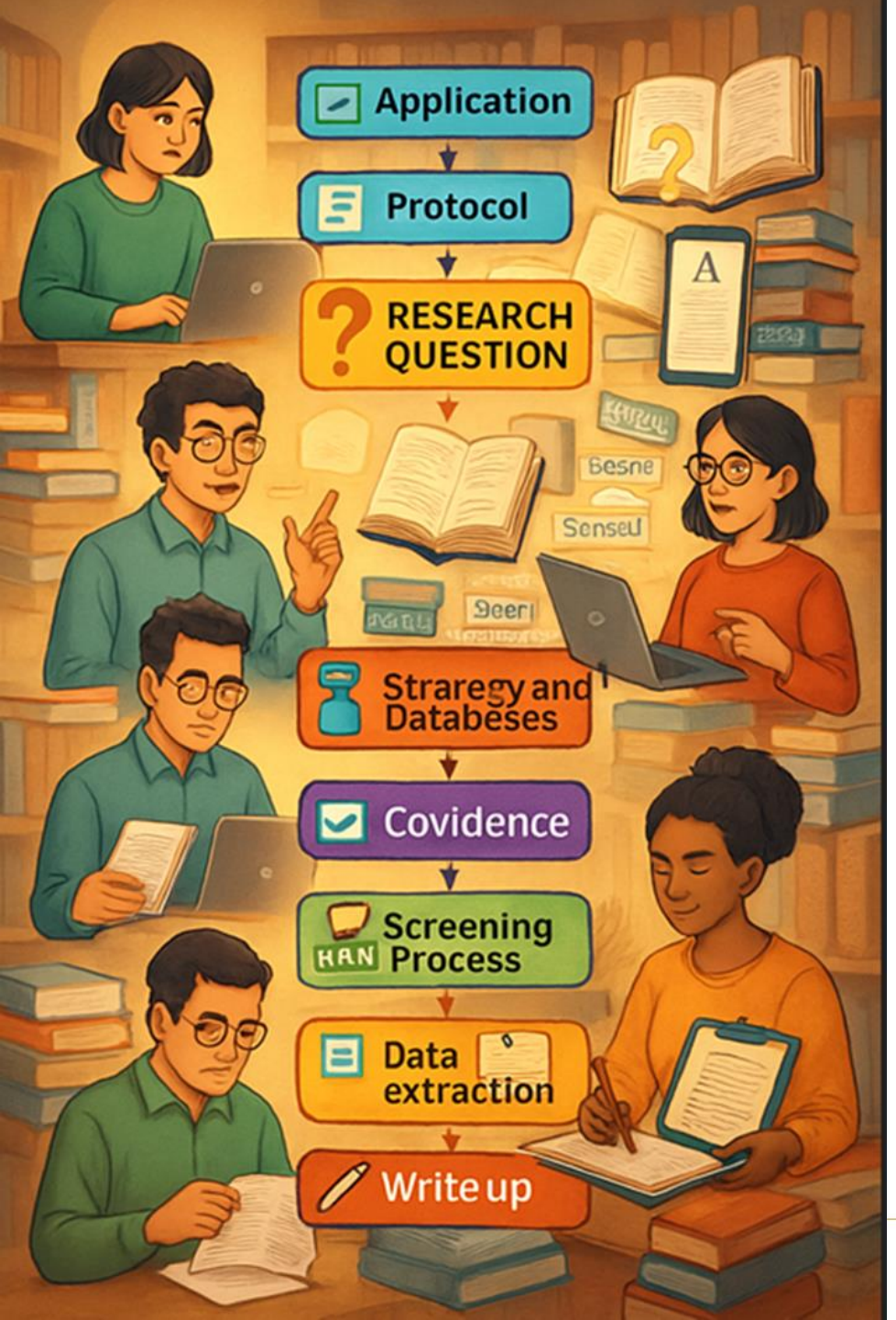
Training for UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Training for HONOURS STUDENTS

Training for MASTER'S STUDENTS

Training for PhD STUDENTS

ONGOING PROGRAM BY THE RESEARCH HUB



Scoping Review Approach

Arksey & O'Malley Outlined the Structured Framework

Research Topic : Sample Scoping Review

The impact of virtual reality and immersive technologies on patient education in health settings

Framework Application :

- **P (Population):** Who or what is being studied.
- **C (Concept):** The main idea, topic, or phenomenon of interest.
- **C (Context):** The setting or specific characteristics influencing the study.

Concept I. → ("Patient education" or "health education" or "patient instruction" or "health literacy training" or "patient counseling" or "patient guidance")

AND

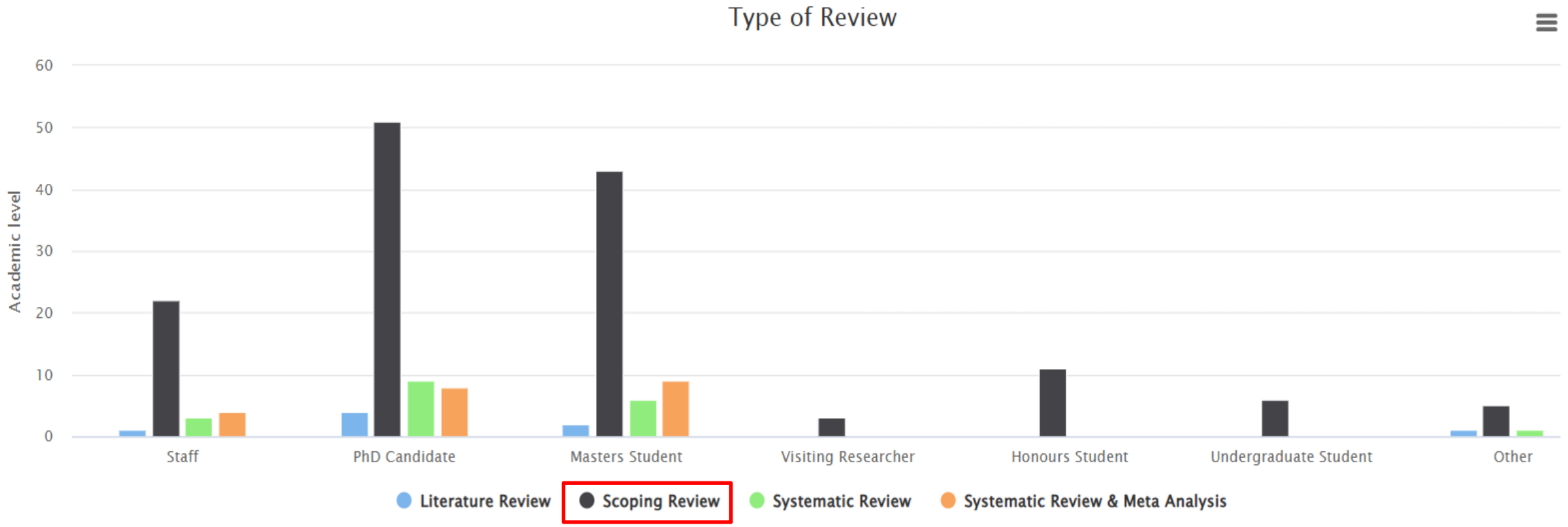
Concept 2. → ("Virtual reality" OR "immersive reality" OR "computer-generated reality" OR "simulated reality" OR "digital reality" OR "virtual environment" OR "synthetic reality" OR "3d simulation")

AND

Concepts 3. → Healthcare settings, hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centers, community health programs, or remote/telehealth environments where VR is implemented for patient education.

DATABASE	SEARCH STRING	RESULTS
EBSCOhost: CINAHL, MEDLINE (2025/08/11)	TX (“Virtual reality” OR “immersive reality” OR “computer-generated reality” OR “simulated reality” OR “digital reality” OR “virtual environment” OR “synthetic reality” OR “3d simulation”) AND TX (“Patient education” or “health education” or “patient instruction” or “health literacy training” or “patient counseling” or “patient guidance”)	Link 880
Scopus (2025/08/11)	(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Virtual reality" OR "immersive reality" OR "computer-generated reality" OR "simulated reality" OR "digital reality" OR "virtual environment" OR "synthetic reality" OR "3d simulation") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Patient education" OR "health education" OR "patient instruction" OR "health literacy training" OR "patient counseling" OR "patient guidance")) AND PUBYEAR > 2015 AND PUBYEAR < 2025	Link 804
PubMed (2025/08/11)	("Virtual reality" OR "immersive reality" OR "computer-generated reality" OR "simulated reality" OR "digital reality" OR "virtual environment" OR "synthetic reality" OR "3d simulation") AND ("Patient education" or "health education" or "patient instruction" or "health literacy training" or "patient counseling" or "patient guidance") Filters: in the last 10 years	Link 351

ESR Performance (June 2024-2025)

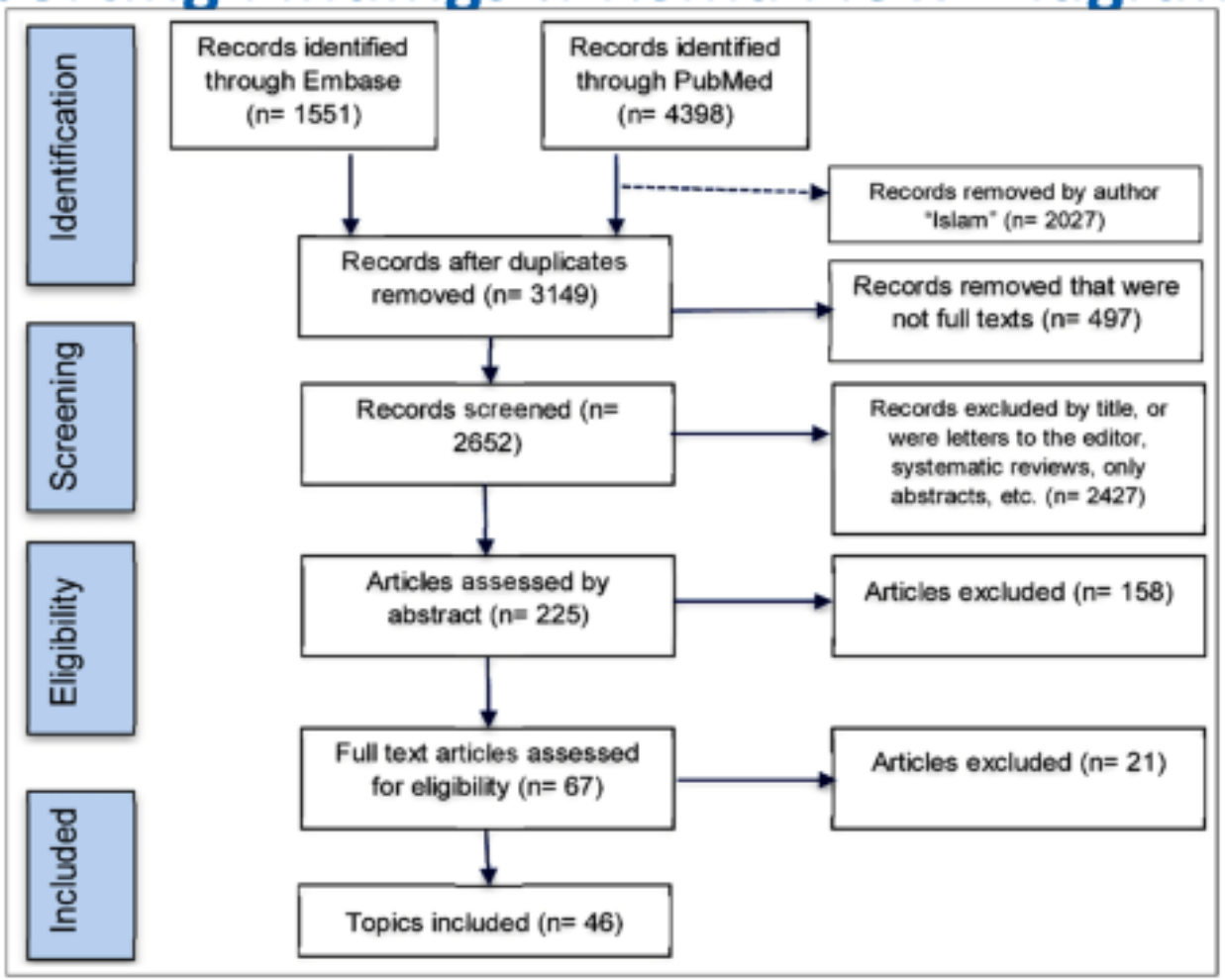


Response	Number of Submissions	% of Overall Submissions
Literature Review	8	4.23%
Scoping Review	141	74.60%
Systematic Review	19	10.05%
Systematic Review & Meta Analysis	21	11.11%
Total	189	100.00%

Allows you to…….

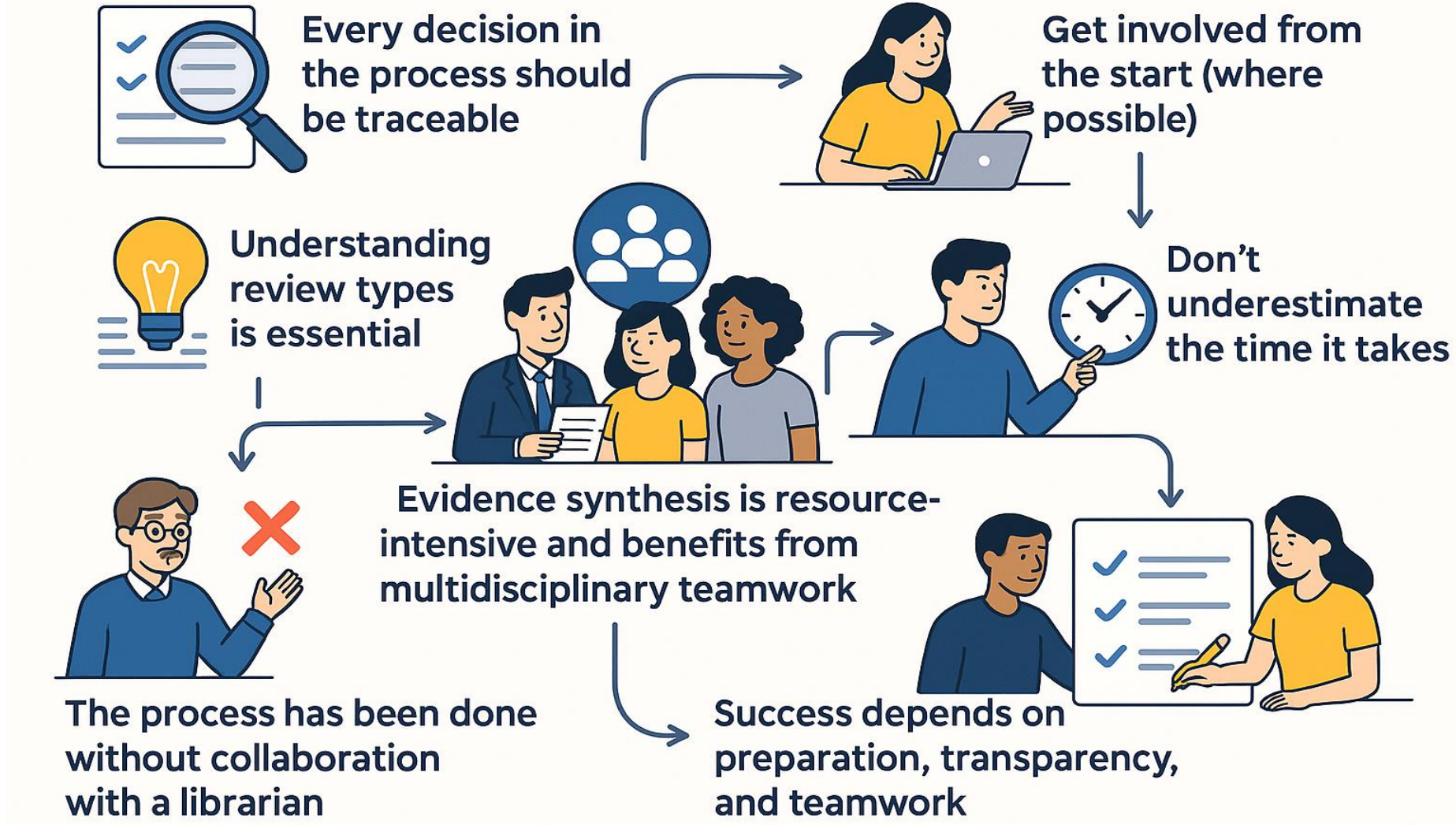
- Login to Covidence via Library Website A-Z List
- Exporting the citation to covidence
- Clean up duplicates- remove
- Inclusion & exclusion
- Invite the reviewers
- Screening- Title and abstract
- Screening- Full text- which titles meet the final inclusion?
- Blind screening-reviewer must screen independently before seeing the other's
- Exporting the reviews to PRISMA

Reporting Findings :Prisma Flow Diagram



https://www.researchgate.net/figure/PRISMA-model-Preferred-Reporting-Items-for-Systematic-Review-and-Meta-Analysis-PRISMA_fig1_333170634

Lessons Learned



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Establishment of **Evidence Synthesis Research Hubs** as centres of expertise and collaboration
- Development of **structured courses and workshops** to train postgraduate students, early-career researchers, and faculty
- **Ongoing skills development** for information specialists to take leadership roles in evidence synthesis
- **Expansion of training programs across disciplines** (health sciences, education, social sciences, environment, et)
- **Building sustainable institutional partnerships** where libraries act as central support structures for evidence synthesis