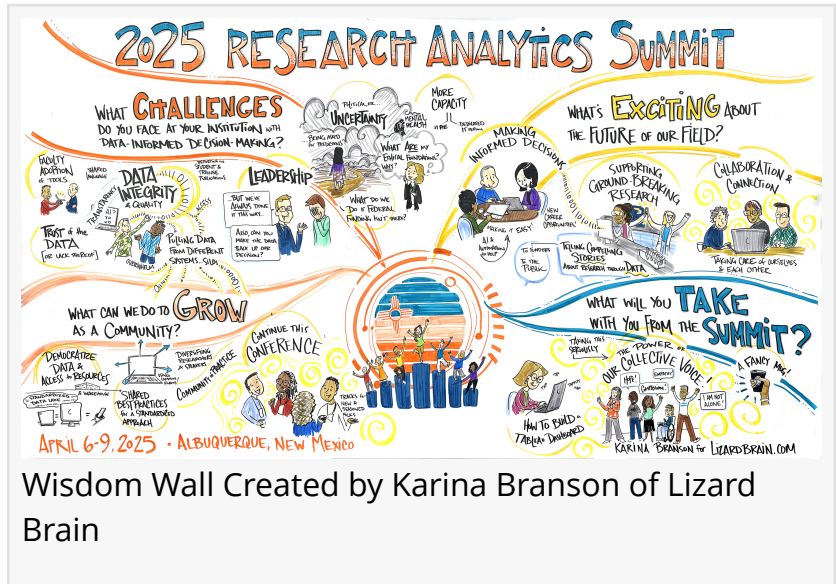


Industry and Academia Collaborate to Secure NSF Grant for Transformative Research Initiative for University of Kentucky

Bringing together innovative facilitation techniques and state-of-the-art analytics can unlock new possibilities for research and beyond

LEXINGTON, KY, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Lizard Brain, a leader in visual collaboration and innovative facilitation techniques, partnered with the University of Kentucky's Data Analytics Department Director Baron Wolf, Ph.D, to secure funding for the groundbreaking Research Evaluation and Analytics Capacity Hub (REACH). Supported by a \$913,685 grant awarded by the National Science Foundation ([NSF](#)), REACH is poised to revolutionize research administration through the responsible use of data, artificial intelligence (AI), and evidence-based decision-making.



Wisdom Wall Created by Karina Branson of Lizard Brain

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Chris Cushing, Studio Manager, Lizard Brain

The collaboration between Lizard Brain and the University of Kentucky (UK) highlights how innovative approaches can drive success in competitive funding and research development. Lizard Brain’s unique ability to design spaces where ideas flow freely and decisions are made efficiently was instrumental in shaping a compelling vision for REACH. This initiative aims to empower institutions of all sizes to enhance research strategies, innovate with data, and strengthen research capacity.

“REACH is much more than a research initiative; it’s a platform for collaboration, learning, and growth across the research ecosystem,” said Baron Wolf, Ph.D., principal investigator and director of Research Analytics at UK. “With Lizard Brain’s expertise in fostering creativity and clarity in collaborative settings, we were able to bring stakeholders together to imagine and

articulate a future where data and AI drive smarter, more strategic research decisions."

The REACH initiative is designed to build a national community of research professionals, including administrators, faculty, librarians, and data analysts. Core components include the Research Analytics Mentoring Program (RAMP), an annual Research Analytics Summit, and comprehensive online resources and training. These efforts aim to promote interdisciplinary collaboration while ensuring equitable access to cutting-edge tools and shared learning opportunities for all types of institutions, from research-intensive universities to regional colleges.

"Partnerships like this demonstrate the power of collaboration between industry and academia," said Chris Cushing, Studio Manager of Lizard Brain. "Our work with the University of Kentucky to secure this funding exemplifies how bringing together innovative facilitation techniques and state-of-the-art analytics can unlock new possibilities for research and beyond. We are thrilled to contribute to making REACH a reality for institutions nationwide."

REACH's broader mission is to foster inclusion, transparency, and efficiency in the evolving, data-driven landscape of research administration. The project is set to begin on July 1, and its outcomes are expected to set new benchmarks for responsible research evaluation and capacity building on a national scale.

For more information about Lizard Brain and its role in advancing the REACH initiative, please contact Chris Cushing at chris@lizardbrain.com.

About Lizard Brain

Lizard Brain helps organizations achieve breakthrough results by harnessing the power of visual collaboration. Through innovative facilitation techniques and compelling visuals, we create environments where ideas thrive, decisions are accelerated, and every voice is valued. To learn more, visit <https://www.lizardbrain.com>

About the University of Kentucky Data Analytics Department

The University of Kentucky Data Analytics Department, part of the Office of Institutional Research, Analytics, and Decision Support, plays a pivotal role in advancing research excellence. Through data-driven strategies and cutting-edge tools, the department is dedicated to supporting academic and research institutions nationwide. For more information, visit <https://research.uky.edu/research-analytics>.

Chris Cushing

Lizard Brain

chris@lizardbrain.com

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