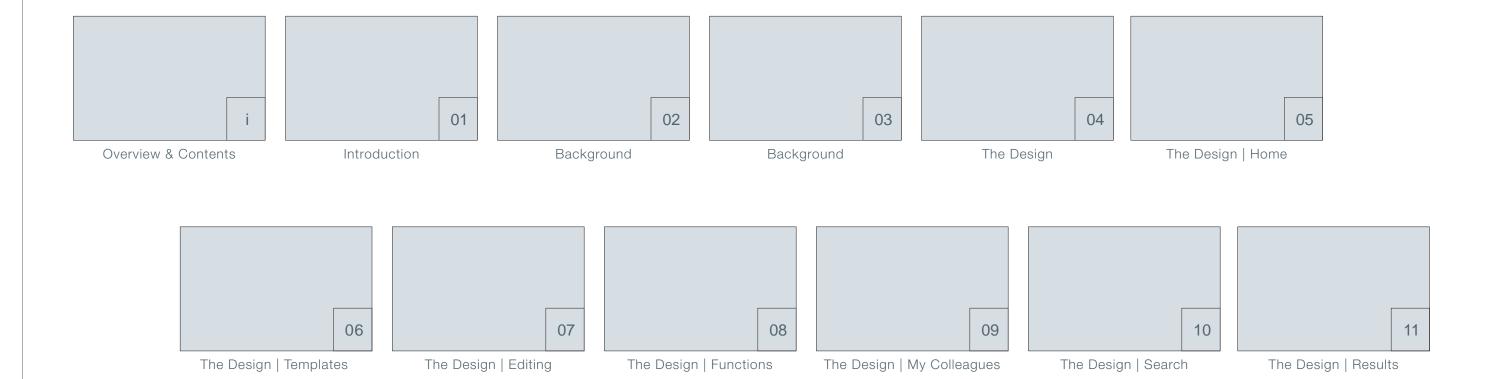


... Overview of Contents

The Digital Vita Experience

The Digital Vita online document and collaboration system is designed to support busy academics who want to connect with fellow researchers and not worry about the minutiae of maintaining CVs, Biosketches and other professional documents.

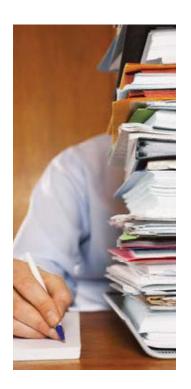


Introduction

Researchers lead busy lives. Beyond their academic pursuits there are a host of professional activities that are inadequately supported by technology. Most researchers maintain a collection of professional documents that contain the biography of their academic careers and serve as the currency for early communication between potential collaborators.

The goal of the Digital Vita system is ultimately to support the process of scientific discovery.

Technology is poorly deployed in support of researcher workpractice. Every year the NIH makes changes to the formatting of biosketches. Universities across the U.S. have their own layouts and styles for curriculum vitae. Individuals within departments vary in their adherence to mandated yet insufficiently enforced standards. Yet across this wide spectrum of variance in styles and formatting much of the information is essentially the same.



Researchers should be liberated from the headache of compliance with templates and preferred styles when it is the information, not the format, that matters. Ideally, there should be a system that stores the information in one place and outputs it to many different documents. Digital Vita performs this task. It removes the hassle and pain from updating documents by allowing researchers to manage their data and save it in a variety of formats, all with only a few clicks.





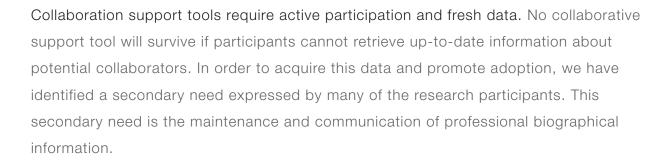


:: Background

In order to be successful, collaborative support tools require trust. Poor understanding, inadequate support, obsolete data, low awareness, frustrating interaction and inherent complexity are all reasons why prior attempts at supporting the initiation of collaboration have failed. In order for a new tool to overcome this stigma and seed adoption, it needs to demonstrate a purpose, perform intuitively and supply added value.

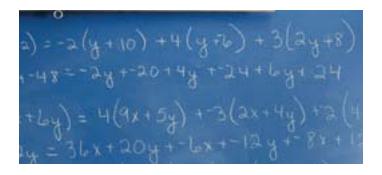


Users and therefore systems require up-to-date and accurate information



By supplying researchers with the means to easily maintain and share their professional academic canon, we are planting the seeds necessary to populate a system with accurate and recent information.







:: Background



Social networks and connections are important to collaboration opportunities.

Researchers often use their existing connections as their primary resource in finding new candidates for collaboration. Researchers are more likely to contact a friend or colleague who they think will know an expert in the field they need rather than cold call an author of a relevant research paper (Flynn, 2005).



A network of connections allows researchers to circumvent cold-calling.



Digital Vita supports collaboration by leveraging existing social networks. Digital Vita receives baseline social network data from university affiliations and coauthorship on papers. This feature combined with refined input from users allows Digital Vita to provide relevant connections to researchers using people they already know. By providing researchers with known intermediaries, they are empowered to seek new collaborators without all the problems associated with cold-calling.

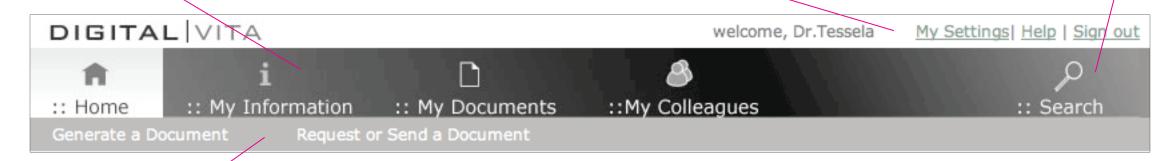
:: The Design

The global header is the primary location for system-wide navigation. Researchers have access to all of the principal functions and sections of Digital Vita from a single and consistent location. The header is placed prominently at the top of every page to communicate a sense of place and flexibility in Digital Vita.

The largest amount of header real estate is used to communicate and contain the different sections of Digital Vita accessible to the user. From this area a user can access all of the primary sections of the system.

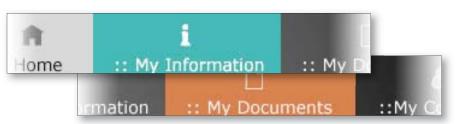
User account, sign-in/out, and login information is placed above the global navigation, at the very top of the interface. This location abides by convention and ensures the user precedence in the interface above all other elements.

Search is an important part of almost any information system. In Digital Vita, search is contained in the main-navigation area of the website but separated in order to grant it special distinction as a primary function accessible from any part of Digital Vita.



Users have immediate access to two specific sets of functionality that are frequently part of their task goals. Because both Generating New Documents and Document Transactions were identified as primary tasks, they are given prevalence in the header.

The design of the header is simple and elegant. The major components reside in the largest area and stand out in contrast to secondary header elements. The use of icons further signifies the importance of the global navigation. Location awareness within Digital Vita is handled by reverse highlight or color, while mouse-over highlight indicates potential action.



Current location feedback for different content sections.

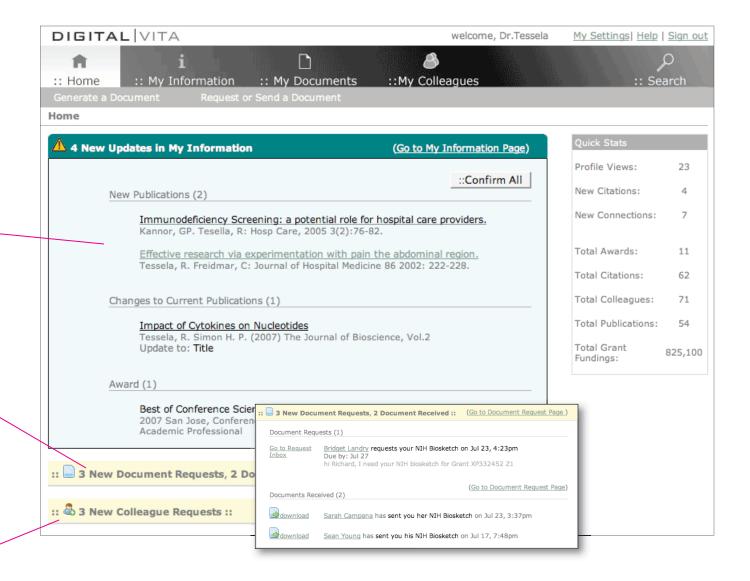
:: The Design | Home

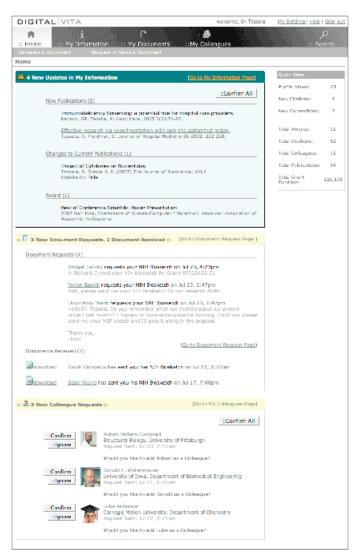
The Home page is the starting point for all returning users. Here researchers can see the latest updates to their information, respond to any document requests from other researchers and add new researchers into their My Colleagues network.

Digital Vita pays special attention to a users' information. Updates and additions are shown prominently on the home page and given the largest amount of space. In this area, a researcher can quickly review all relevant updates and go quickly to their central database of information to apply or edit these updates. These updates are pulled automatically from online databases such as Medline and CRISP, as well as from synchronizing information across researcher profiles.

In addition to updates, the home page also details document transactions. The yellow bars expand to reveal incoming documents and requests for documents from other researchers.

Social connections are a critical component of potential research collaborations. In this section of the home page, a researcher can view all new incoming colleague requests and respond appropriately.





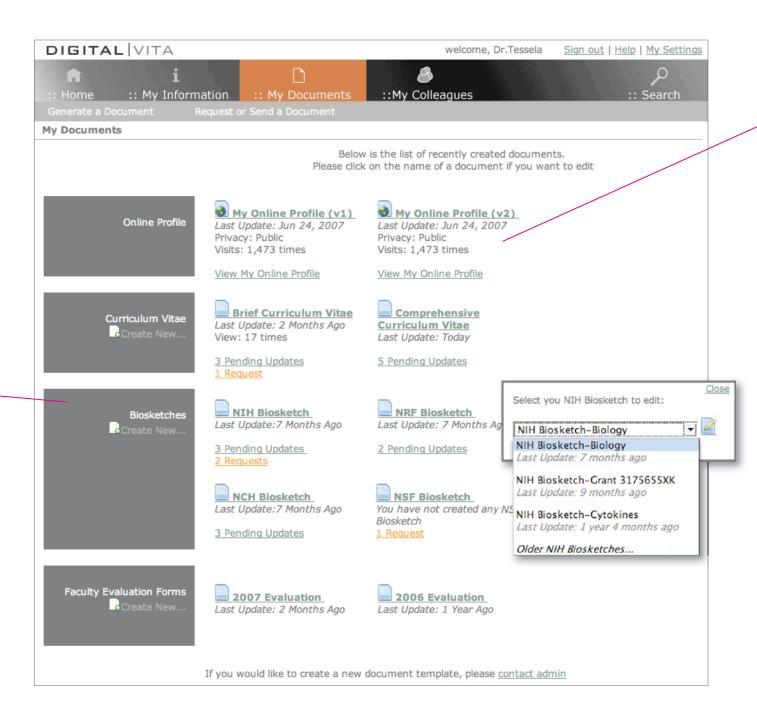
Fully expanded home page.

!! The Design | My Documents - Choosing a Template

The My Documents page is the researcher's starting point for the creation of new documents & templates and the management of previously created documents and templates. Here a researcher can choose between existing document formats to edit and update, respond to requests for documents and create new templates.

Most researchers create a variety of documents over their academic career. The My Documents page displays all of the living documents a research currently maintains. The information contained in each of the documents is pulled directly from the central database of information ("My Information") and automatically formatted to fit the appropriate template.

Type of document is denoted by the vertical gray sections. Within each section, a variety of specialized types are displayed depending on the requirements of the user.

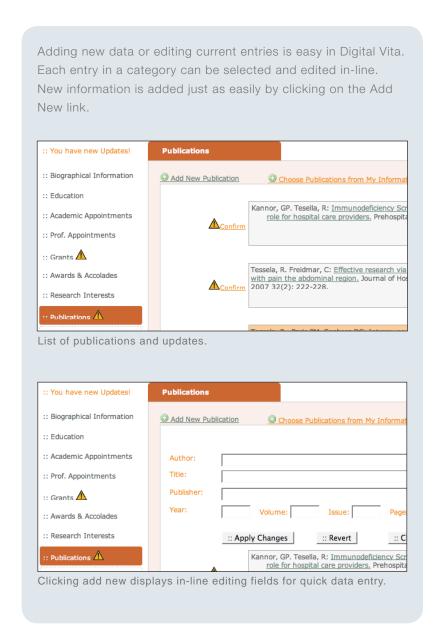


Each document type displays pertinent information about that document. A user can see if there are relevant updates, when the last update occurred and any incoming requests.

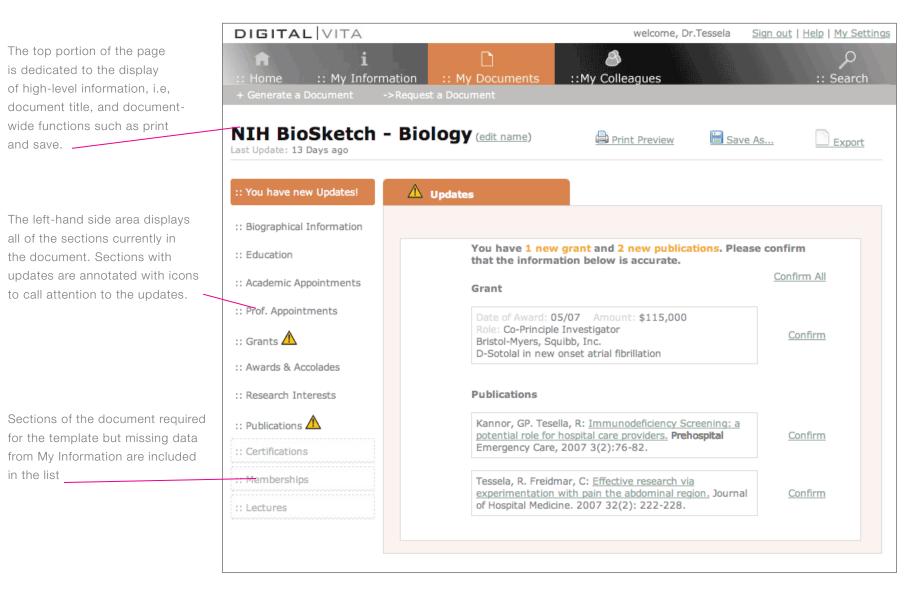
Researchers often maintain different versions of a specific document type for different reasons. For each type of document, a user can create other versions if necessary.

!! The Design | My Documents - Editing a Document

The My Documents editing page is the researcher's all-in-one editing, managing and sharing resource for the maintenance and communication of professional information. Here researchers can add, edit and remove biographical information, output to a spectrum of standard templates and styles without worrying about formatting or layout, and export to common digital document formats.



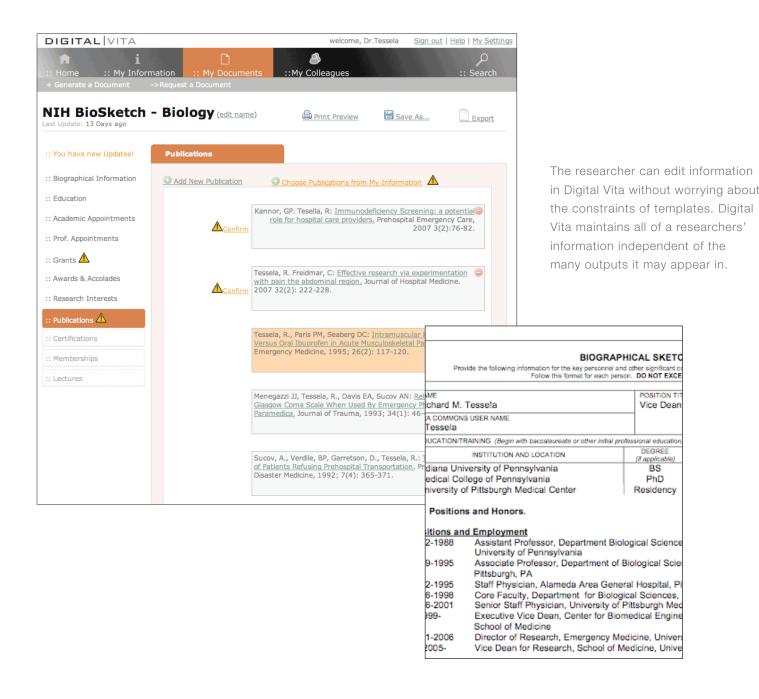
The largest portion of the page is reserved for the most important content of the document. When a section is selected on the left, the relevant entries of that section are displayed in the main area. Each individual entry can be edited or removed and new entries can be added easily.



Keeping accurate and up to date information is a critical component of the document life cycle. When the specific document page is first visited, any relevant updates or additions are automatically displayed on the screen. From here the user can quickly apply the new updates and continue working.

The Design | My Documents - Common Functions

The My Documents Page also contains features and outputs that mesh seamlessly with current work practice. From the My Documents page researchers can preview the output of the document in the style of the templates they are used to, without worrying about formatting or constraints. The researcher can also export to a number of common file types including word documents and PDFs.



Users can save their documents to location-independent repository that can be accessed from any computer with an internet connection.

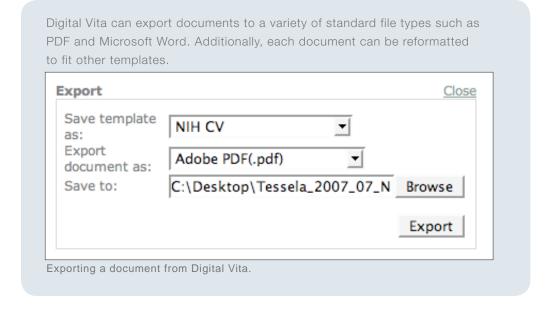
Save As

Close

Save as:

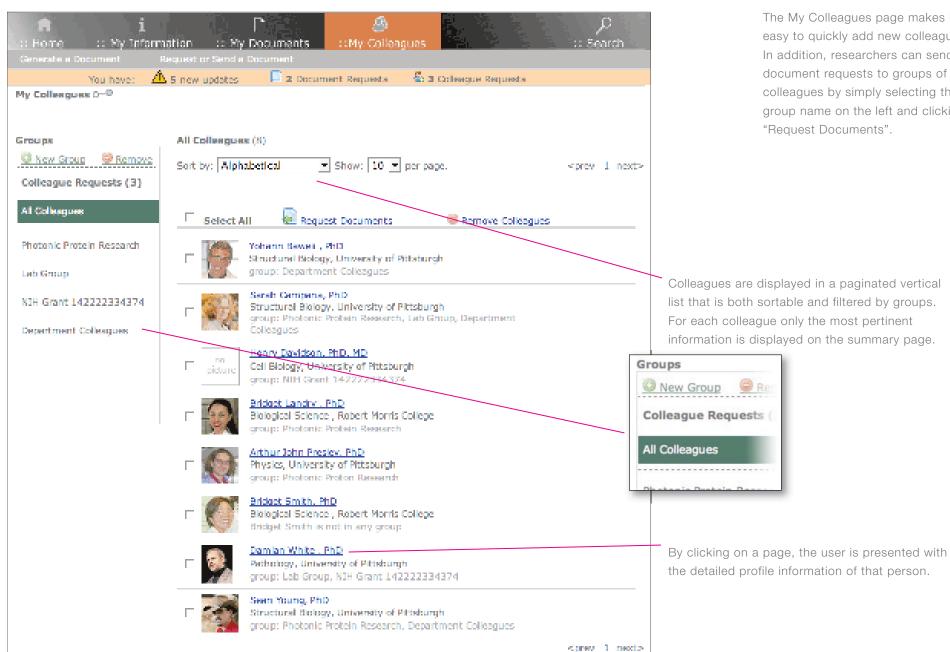
NIH Biosketch-Biology

Save

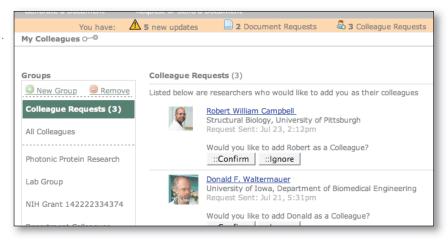


!! The Design | My Colleagues

The My Colleagues page is the living place for all of the friends and colleagues a researcher accumulates over a professional academic career. Here users can share and request documents from researchers, create groups of colleagues for collaborative projects and special interests groups, and investigate the professional background of individuals.

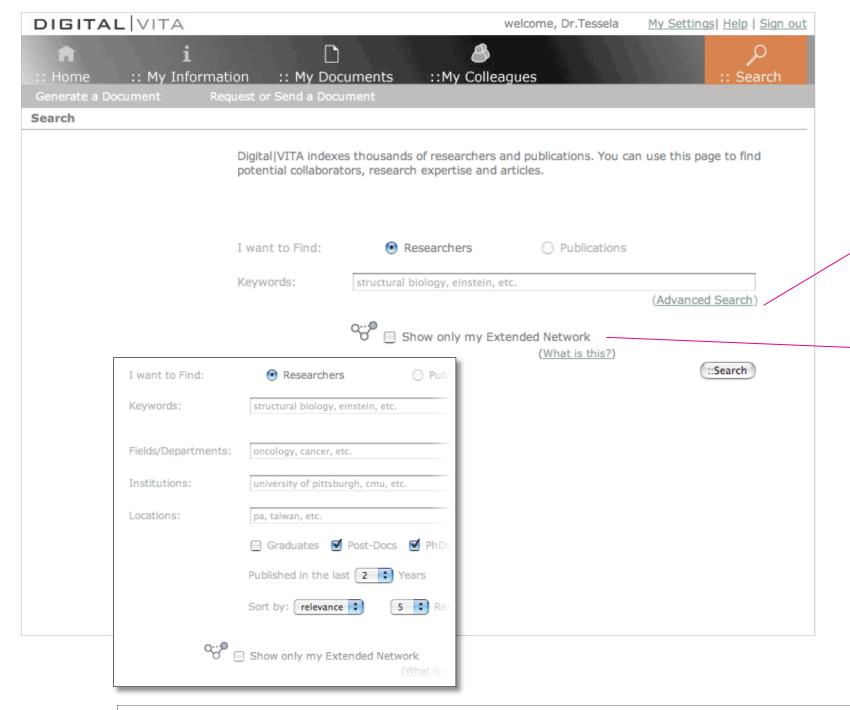


The My Colleagues page makes it easy to quickly add new colleagues. In addition, researchers can send document requests to groups of colleagues by simply selecting the group name on the left and clicking



The Design | Search

The Search page is a portal to the collection of documents, researchers and social connections that make up Digital Vita. Here users can locate expertise, search publications, and make new researcher connections.



Users have the option to perform both a simple and a more advanced search. Advanced search allows user to specify additional search criteria to apply to search results.

By selecting "Show only my Extended Network" a user can filter search results to return only colleagues and researchers the user has a connection with.

The Design | Results and Profile

The Search Results and Profile pages are the user's gateway to finding more detailed information about researchers and social connections. From the search results page, users can get more in-depth views on individual researchers, initiate communication and further refine results.

