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WHITESIDE RESEARCH GOVERNANCE SERIES
Executive Summary · WGRS-WP-2026-001-ES

The Whiteside Literature Review Standard (WLRS) v2.0

*A Constitutional Framework for Governing Scholarly Evidence
as Permanent Intellectual Assets*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY — COMPANION ASSET

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Executive Overview

The volume, complexity, and diversity of scholarly evidence have increased dramatically in the era of digital research and artificial intelligence. Researchers routinely manage hundreds or thousands of journal articles, books, government reports, datasets, annotations, AI conversations, and manuscript drafts throughout a single research program. While citation managers effectively organize bibliographic records, they rarely provide governance mechanisms for preserving, evaluating, and systematically reusing scholarly evidence across multiple projects.

The Whiteside Literature Review Standard (WLRS) addresses this challenge by introducing a constitutional governance framework that redefines scholarly evidence as permanent intellectual assets rather than disposable citations created for a single manuscript. Instead of viewing literature reviews as isolated academic exercises, WLRS establishes a comprehensive governance architecture for acquiring, evaluating, preserving, organizing, and reusing evidence throughout the lifecycle of a research program.

WLRS v2.0 is the constitutional standard presented through WGRS-WP-2026-001, an independently published working paper classified as a Foundational Research Governance Document. This Executive Summary (WGRS-WP-2026-001-ES) serves as a companion gateway to the full constitution.

THE DISTINCTION IN ONE LINE

Current literature review methods emphasize finding sources. WLRS instead emphasizes governing them.

The Scholarly Problem

Traditional literature review practices often emphasize the completion of a single publication rather than the long-term stewardship of scholarly evidence. As research programs expand, investigators frequently encounter several persistent governance challenges:

- Foundational sources are repeatedly rediscovered rather than systematically maintained.
- Literature reviews become fragmented across multiple software platforms and storage systems.
- Research notes, annotations, and AI-assisted conversations become disconnected from their original sources.
- Valuable intellectual work is lost between projects.
- Citation libraries preserve references but not institutional knowledge.
- AI-assisted research workflows frequently lack governance, traceability, and accountability.

These limitations reduce research efficiency while increasing duplication of effort and diminishing the long-term value of scholarly work.

Why This Matters

Why does this problem matter?

Contemporary researchers face unprecedented growth in scholarly literature, digital evidence, AI-generated research outputs, and institutional information systems. As research ecosystems expand, maintaining continuity, traceability, and governance becomes increasingly difficult. The consequences of fragmentation may include wasted time, inconsistent scholarship, lost intellectual capital, and weakened evidence chains from source to claim.

What does this publication contribute that is genuinely new?

Current literature review methods emphasize finding sources. WLRS instead emphasizes governing them. This distinction is fundamental.

APPROACH	TREATMENT OF A SOURCE
Traditional methods	Sources are consumed, quoted, and retired.
WLRS	Sources become permanent intellectual assets, processed once and reused across multiple projects.

The three constitutional innovations described below — the Foundational Gate, the Citation Hub Architecture, and the Research Maturity Model — distinguish WLRS from conventional citation-management practices and from literature-review approaches centred primarily on source discovery, synthesis, and manuscript completion.

Why should institutions consider this framework?

WLRS offers a structured basis for institutions to pursue several potential benefits:

- Research integrity: auditable evidence chains may strengthen the defensibility of scholarly claims.
- Doctoral research organisation: structured evidence governance may reduce avoidable delays associated with fragmented literature records.
- Faculty productivity: reusable evidence assets may reduce repeated processing across related projects.
- AI governance: defined verification and traceability requirements can help preserve human accountability in AI-assisted workflows.
- Institutional memory: governed evidence assets can support continuity beyond a single manuscript or researcher.

Four Constitutional Principles

WLRS rests on four constitutional principles that define its approach and govern its operation.

1	Permanent Intellectual Assets Literature sources are treated as durable scholarly assets rather than temporary citations, supporting dissertation research, journal articles, conference presentations, books, executive education, teaching, and public scholarship without requiring re-processing from scratch.
2	Evidence Before Output Knowledge capture precedes publication. Outputs emerge from a governed evidence base rather than isolated writing sessions, ensuring claims can be traced back to verified source quotations.
3	Structured Reuse A processed source is designed to be reusable across multiple projects without recreating notes. A single evidence package — quotations, connections, critical appraisals, and derivative outputs — serves future scholarly work.
4	Living Scholarship Sources are treated as living documents through structured re-engagement rather than static archives. As interpretations evolve, source notes can be updated through a Re-engagement Log, preserving chronological development.

SUPPORTING DESIGN REQUIREMENT — TOOL INDEPENDENCE

WLRS is designed to remain functional across AI platforms, citation-management systems, and research environments. Its governance requirements are therefore expressed in platform-neutral terms.

Three Constitutional Innovations

1. The Foundational Gate

Not every source merits full constitutional processing. WLRs uses a two-stage Foundational Gate to classify sources into Tier A (full processing) or Tier B (lite processing).

STAGE 1 — OBJECTIVE SCORE

Considered for Tier A if it meets at least four criteria:

- Supports a major theoretical construct
- Cited three or more times in a major work
- Cross-project relevance
- Generates or substantially shapes a conceptual framework
- Appears in conference presentations
- Supports dissertation arguments
- Likely to be reused in future books
- Materially changes the researcher's thinking

STAGE 2 — CONSTITUTIONAL OVERRIDE

If this source disappeared tomorrow, would one or more of the researcher's major arguments materially weaken?

An affirmative answer classifies the source as Tier A regardless of its objective score. This override ensures scholarly judgment remains the deciding factor.

2. The Citation Hub Architecture

A Tier A source is processed into a structured set of thirteen notes, each serving a distinct governance function. For executive readability, they are grouped below by governance function.

GOVERNANCE FUNCTION	CITATION HUB ASSETS
Evidence capture	C.01 Executive Summary and Evidence Register; C.02 Key Quotations
Research integration	C.03 Program Connections; C.05 Dissertation Connections; C.10 Cross-References
Scholarly interrogation	C.04 Question Bank; C.06 AI-Assisted Source Dialogue; C.09 Critical Appraisal
Knowledge translation	C.07 Podcast Asset; C.12 Teaching and Ministry Applications
Future development	C.08 Future Research Ideas; C.11 Research Gaps
Traceability	C.13 Citation Map

Each note from C.07 onward is paired with a stored generation prompt, enabling the asset to be regenerated or checked on future platforms. The labels above are reader-friendly equivalents of the operational terminology used in the constitution.

3. The Research Maturity Model

Every source receives a maturity status that governs its permitted uses.

LEVEL	STATUS	DESCRIPTION	PERMITTED OUTPUTS
L0	Acquired	Bibliographic record created	None
L1	Verified	Metadata and source validated	None
L2	Core Processed	MVP fields complete	Internal drafting only
L3	Integrated	All core fields complete, connected to projects	Dissertation and journal writing
L4	Synthesized	Incorporated into manuscripts or presentations	Conference presentation
L5	Knowledge Translation	Teaching, podcast, video, or public scholarship created	Podcast, YouTube, Executive Education
L6	Re-engaged	Source revisited and interpretations updated after publication	Mature constitutional source

This model prevents premature use of under-processed sources, ensuring scholarship emerges from verified evidence.

Scholarly Contribution

The following statement is the canonical description of this publication's contribution. It is used without alteration across every platform on which the standard appears.

CANONICAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The principal scholarly contribution of WLRS is the reconceptualization of foundational evidence as a governed, reusable, version-controlled intellectual asset rather than a disposable citation tied to a single manuscript. WLRS operationalizes this contribution through four constitutional principles, a two-stage Foundational Gate, a thirteen-part Citation Hub Architecture, an Executive Summary Evidence Register, a Research Maturity Model, and living-scholarship mechanisms.

Rather than proposing another literature review technique, WLRS establishes constitutional principles governing how evidence should be acquired, evaluated, preserved, traced, and reused throughout the lifecycle of scholarly inquiry.

Five-Layer Governance Architecture

WLRs is the first of a planned five-layer governance ecosystem. The architecture below describes the intended structure. The companion standards — ASIP, WSAS, WRVCS, and WEAGS — remain in preparation.

Knowledge Creation	WLRs + ASIP	Evidence acquisition, processing, and AI-assisted interrogation
Knowledge Quality	WSAS	Citation integrity, verification, and counterargument analysis
Knowledge Control	WRVCS	Version history, release management, and archival preservation
Knowledge Stewardship	WEAGS	Asset lifecycle, maturity, derivative outputs, and retirement
Knowledge Integration	Synthesis	Coordinated operation of all standards — planned publication

Future companion standards within this governance architecture are intended to build upon the evidence-governance principles established through WLRs while retaining their own defined scope and authority.

Applications and Audience

The framework is intended for application across diverse research environments.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

- Doctoral education and dissertation development
- Faculty research programs
- Institutional research offices
- Think tanks and policy organisations
- Government research agencies
- Independent scholars
- AI-assisted research workflows
- Knowledge management initiatives within higher education

WHO SHOULD READ THIS

- **Doctoral researchers** — structuring literature reviews and building cumulative capacity
- **Faculty** — managing research programs and supervising candidates
- **Research directors** — institutional governance of scholarly evidence
- **University libraries** — developing evidence stewardship infrastructure
- **Research institutes** — standardising knowledge management practices
- **Independent scholars** — maintaining research continuity across projects
- **Government research offices** — ensuring evidence traceability and accountability
- **AI governance researchers** — governance frameworks for AI-assisted scholarship

Limitations and Current Evidence Status

Current implementation reflects Reference Implementation RI-001 — the processing of Chapter 1 of Thomas Groome’s *Sharing Faith* (1991) — which produced 26 intellectual assets across four production levels. Additional validation across disciplines and institutions remains an area for future investigation.

- The quotation verification process described in the full document remains in progress.
- No independent inter-rater reliability assessment has been conducted.
- Processing efficiency has not been compared with alternative literature review methods.
- Companion governance standards (ASIP, WSAS, WRVCS, WEAGS) remain under development and should be read as proposed components of a broader governance architecture, not as completed or validated standards.

Readers should treat WLRs as a single-implementation pilot rather than an operational, generalizable standard until further reference implementations have been completed.

Companion Scholarly Resources

Consistent with the governance principles established within the constitution, the publication is supported by an integrated scholarly communication ecosystem.

AVAILABLE AT RELEASE

- Full constitutional publication (WGRS-WP-2026-001)
- Executive Summary (this document, WGRS-WP-2026-001-ES)
- Author Overview Video
- Cinematic Presentation
- AnointedEDU Podcast discussions
- Presentation Slide Deck
- Official Publication Website
- ORCID, Wikidata, and Google Scholar records

IN DEVELOPMENT

- AI Companion (prompts, revision history, editorial decisions, constitutional rationale)
- Scholarly Citation Package (APA, BibTeX, RIS, EndNote, Zotero JSON, CSL JSON, plain text, Chicago, MLA)
- Evidence Package (source verification, quotation audit)
- Publication-level analytics and search optimisation

FUTURE OR CONDITIONAL REPOSITORY SERVICES

- DOI assignment, if obtained
- SSRN repository record for this publication, following acceptance if applicable

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MATURITY ASSESSMENT

Under the proposed publication-maturity model being developed for WGRS-PS-001 (still in preparation and not yet released), the current WLRS publication ecosystem is provisionally assessed as approaching Level 4 (Governed Scholarly Ecosystem), subject to completion of the AI Companion, Scholarly Citation Package, Evidence Package, and discoverability infrastructure.

Note. This Executive Summary serves as an initial reference implementation informing the development of the proposed WGRS Publication Standard (WGRS-PS-001): Constitutional Multimedia Scholarly Publication Architecture. WGRS-PS-001 remains in preparation and has not yet been released or independently reviewed.



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Building Constitutional Governance for Scholarly Research

The principal scholarly contribution of WLRS is the reconceptualization of foundational evidence as a governed, reusable, version-controlled intellectual asset rather than a disposable citation tied to a single manuscript.

W H I T E S I D E R E S E A R C H G O V E R N A N C E S E R I E S

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Companion to WGRS-WP-2026-001

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