

# Conducting Information Seeking Behaviour Research in an International, Interdisciplinary Research Project: Experiences and Reflections

Pia Borlund, Nils Pharo and Ying-Hsang Liu

Department of Archivistcs, Library and Information Science, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway



## Introduction

- **Purpose:** To bridge the archives and the user for a dialogue on information access
- **Polyvocal Interpretations of Contested Colonial Heritage (PICCH)**, Joint EU Programming Initiative (JPI) on Cultural Heritage (Total budget: 1.228.278 €, 01/03/2021-31/08/2023)
- **Research partners:** Sheffield Hallam University (UK), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands), Aix Marseille University (France), Voice Interaction (IT company) (Portugal), & OsloMet (Norway)
- **Museum and archive partners:** Sound & Vision, national audio and video archive of The Netherlands, The national audio and video archive of France, Pitt Rivers Museum, UK, EUscreen Foundation, & Europeana Foundation
- No strong empirical tradition of investigating how users search archives and their corresponding information needs

## Research Questions

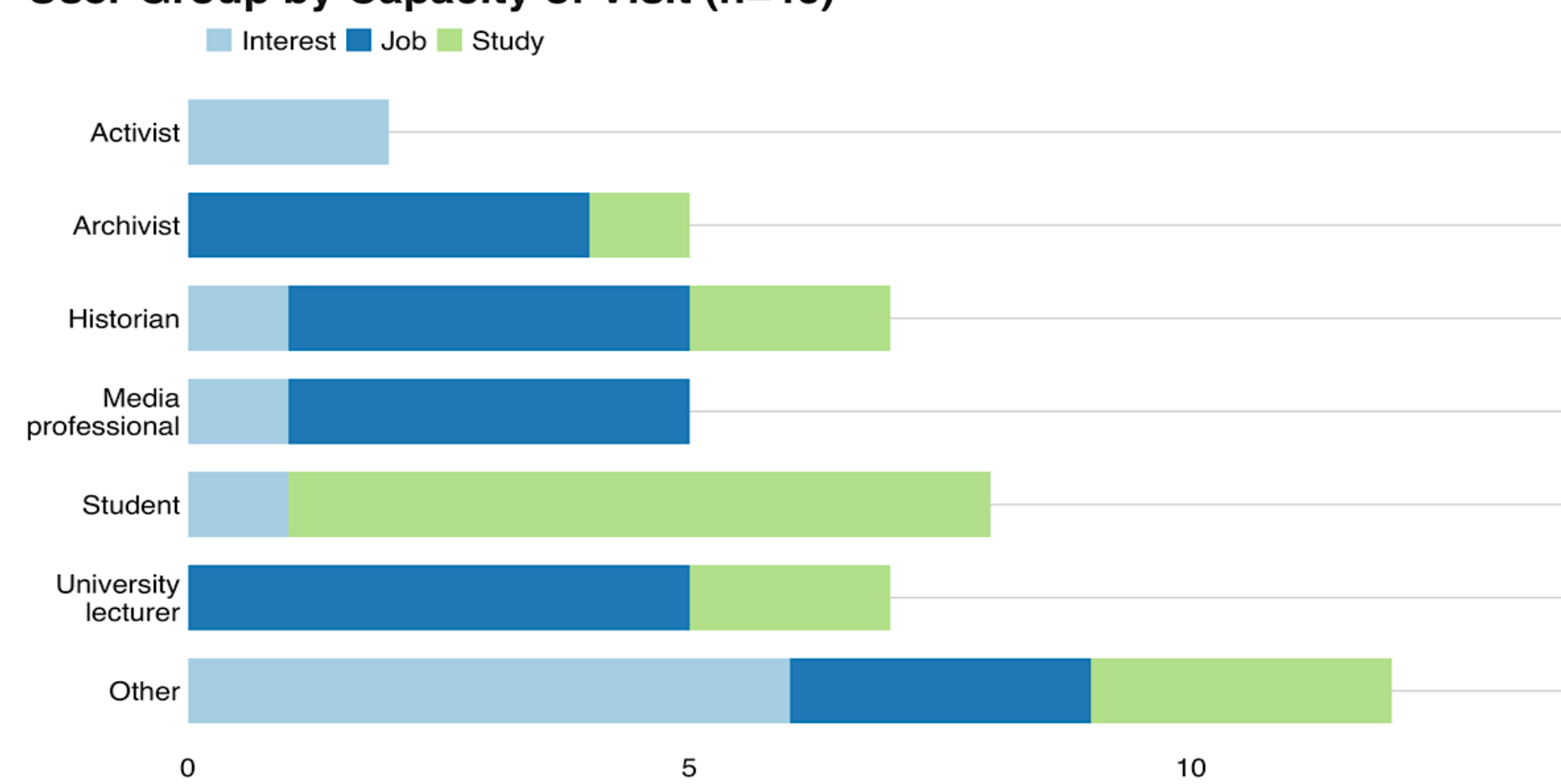
- RQ1: How do different user groups (historians, postcolonial theorists, activists, communities, filmmakers) search video archives?
- RQ2: What needs and strategies do these different groups have?

## Methods

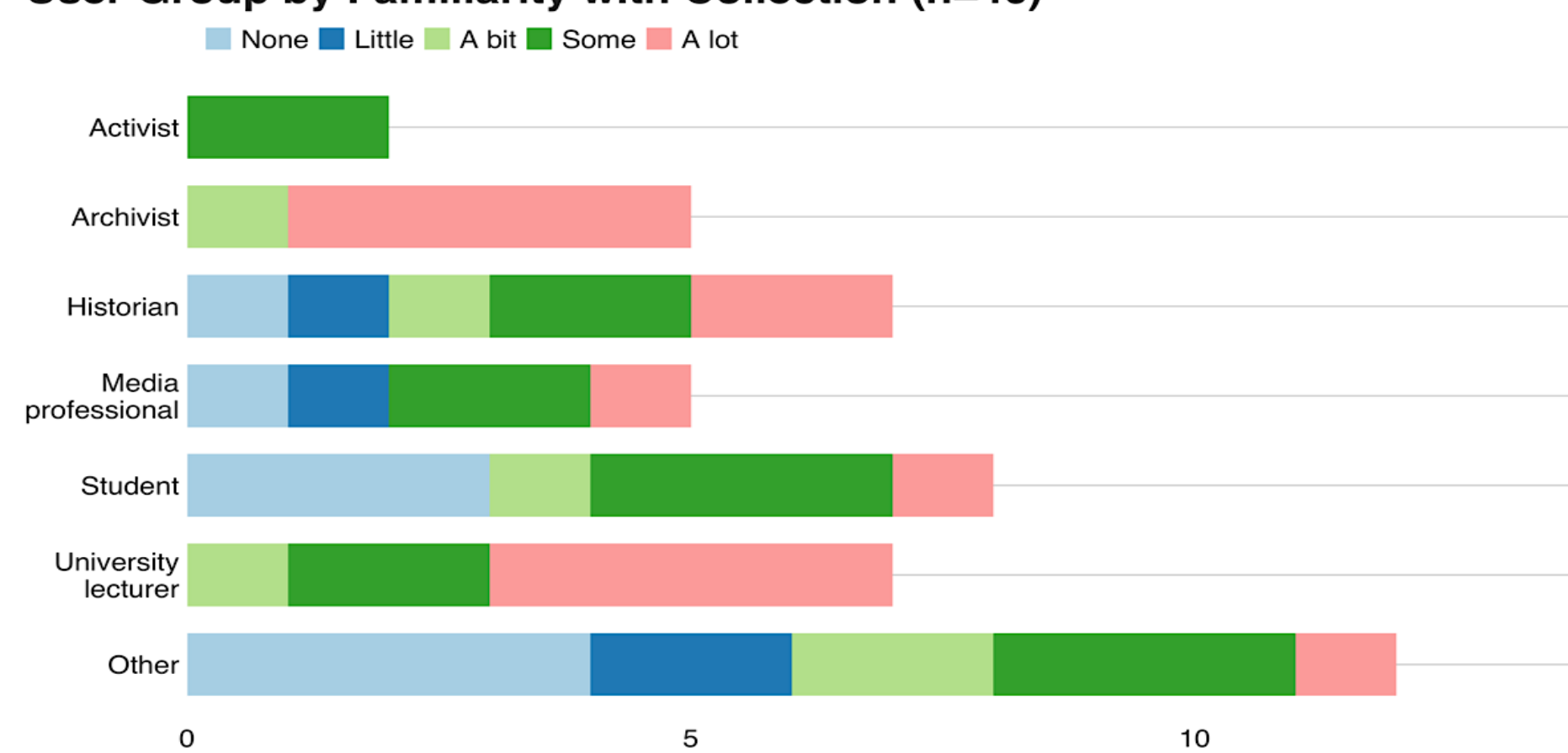
- Pop-up questionnaires (3 versions in English, Dutch and French, 6 links by webpages, contacts and mailing lists)
- A total of 46 responses collected, from November 2021 to April 2022
- Responses from France, UK, Netherlands, and other countries (n = 41)
- Respondents aged from 19 to 77, averaged 47 (n = 41); Female (28), Male (15), Prefer not to say (2) (n = 45)

## Results

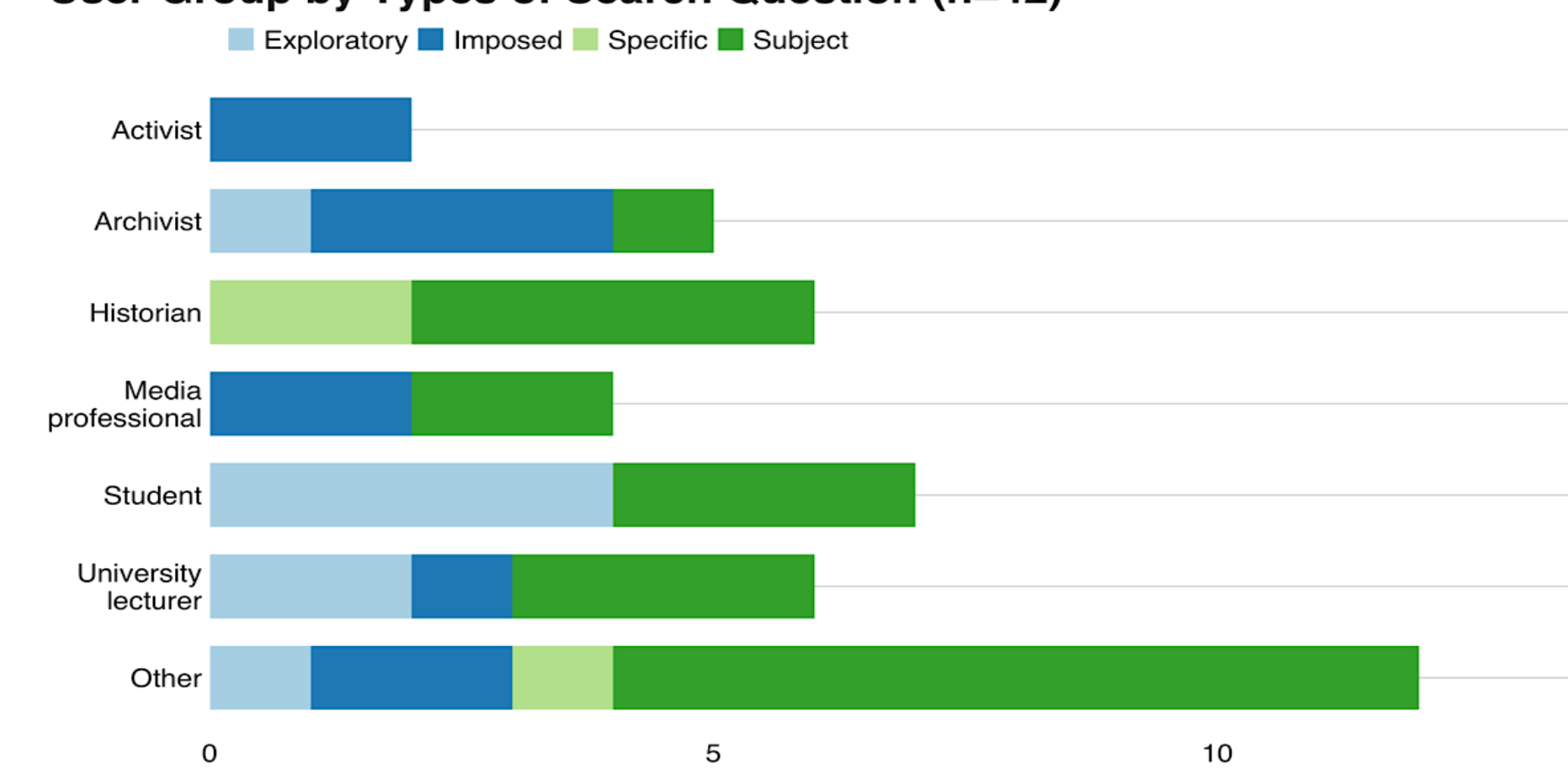
User Group by Capacity of Visit (n=46)



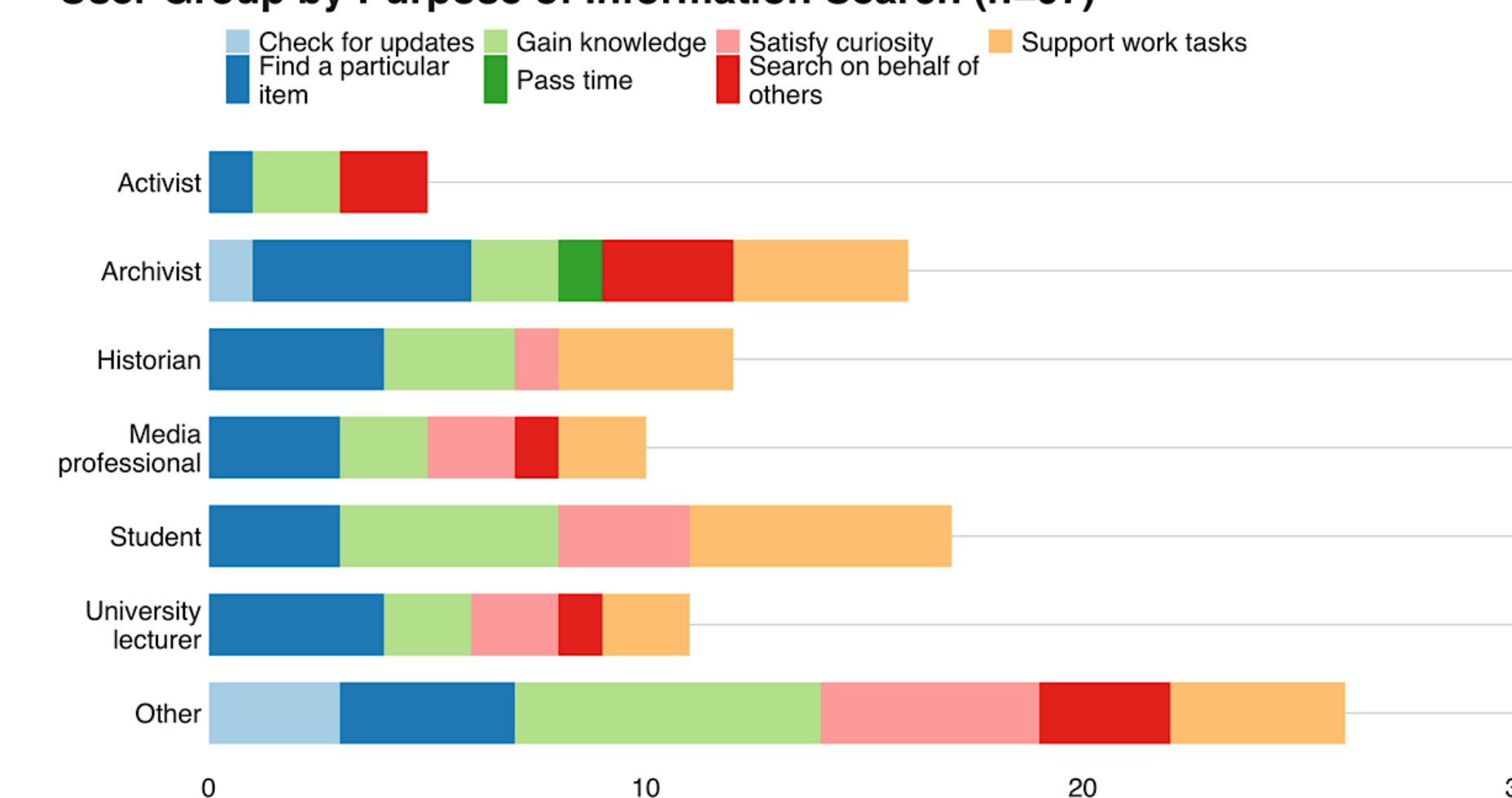
User Group by Familiarity with Collection (n=46)



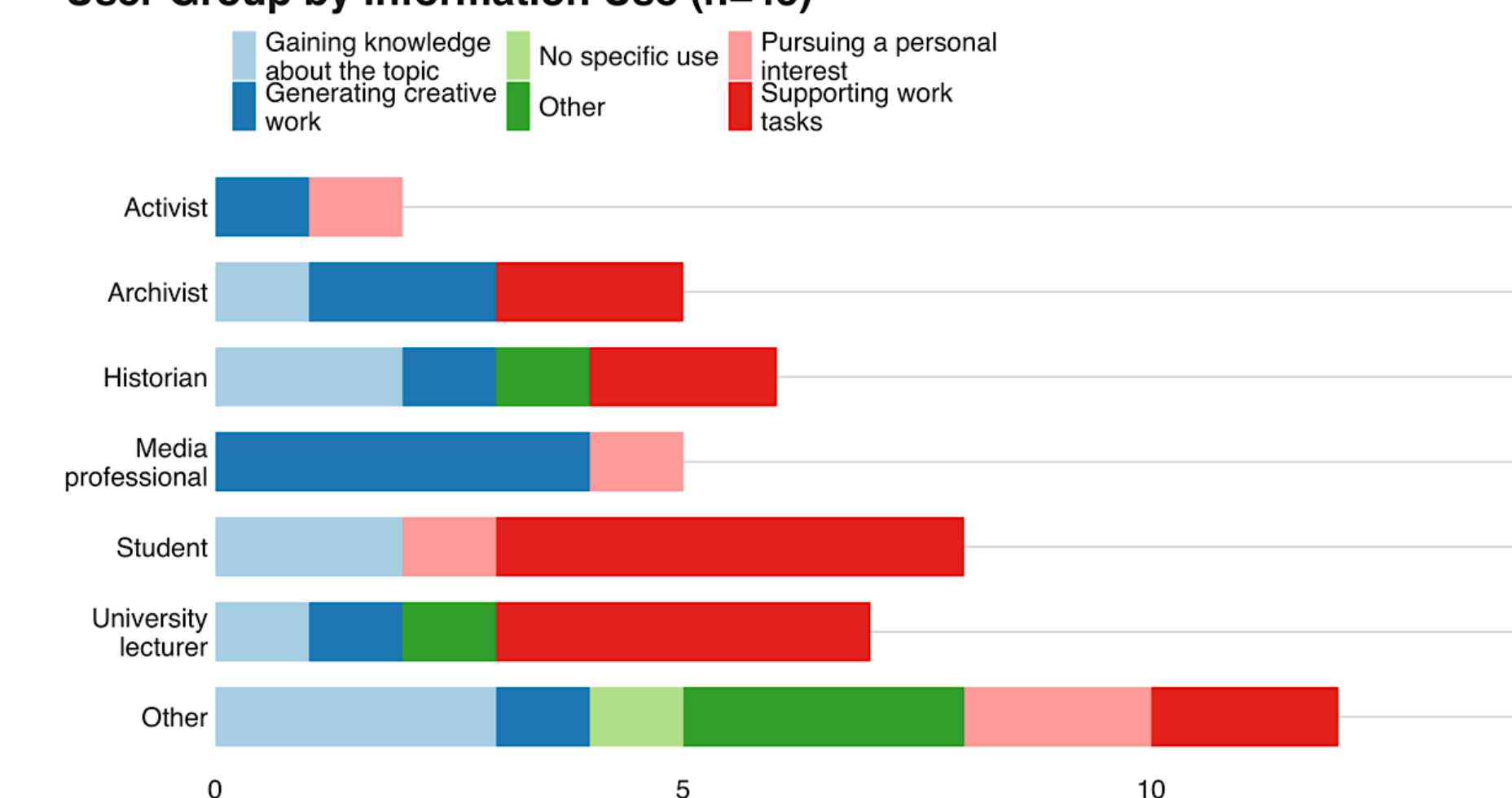
User Group by Types of Search Question (n=42)



User Group by Purpose of Information Search (n=97)



User Group by Information Use (n=45)



## Future Research

- In-depth interviews with under-studied user groups like activists, artists and media professionals
- Provide system design implications to support digital humanities research

This project is funded by The European Joint Programming Initiative Cultural Heritage (JPICCH).  
Email: Pia.Borlund@oslomet.no