**Reference management software programs**allow you to organize your research, collect and cite sources, create bibliographies in a variety of styles, add your own notes and keywords to your citations. Many reference managers work with word processing software to format in-text citations and bibliographies for papers and theses, allow you to share references, and enable you to attach or link PDFs to a citation record.

**Why use a reference management program, it will -**

1. **Provide a search interface**

* Search databases directly from the citation manager.
* Search databases vendor interfaces. Citations are selected and downloaded (**exported**) directly to your citation management software. In some cases the citations are downloaded to your hard drive and **imported** into the citation manager using a special filter.

2. **Create a database of references.**

* Once citations are captured, they can be stored, organized and manipulated in personal mini-databases called "libraries" or groups. Many “groups” can be created and re-organized to meet changing needs.

3. **Insert citations into word processing documents.**

* Using a "cite-while-you-write" feature, allows citations, **footnotes or endnotes** to be inserted into their proper place as you write a paper or manuscript. As they are inserted, a **bibliography** is automatically generated and updated as you change the citations. The newest software versions can permit tables and figures to be inserted as "citations".

4. **Link between citations to image or PDF files.**

* Many citation managers permit **links to image or PDF files** stored on the hard drive of your computer. Add notes to images, figures and tables. Linked images and PDF files can be inserted into word documents as if they were citations.

5. **Format a stand-alone bibliography (reference list).**

* Using criteria you determine, you can create stand-alone **bibliographies** that can be saved in common word processing program formats.