THE PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION'S

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION GUIDE FOR RESEARCHERS

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WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION?

Knowledge mobilization (KMb) aims to **maximize the two-way exchange** [1] **of ideas, knowledge, and expertise between researchers, policymakers, and educators.** The process of KMb consists of several activities related to the production and use of research results and includes the co-creation of KMb plans, outputs, and activities by researchers and education stakeholders. [2] Engaging in the KMb process allows researchers and education stakeholders to drive innovation through research intended to benefit and positively influence practice, policy, and society while simultaneously supporting researchers in developing, conducting, and advancing the impact of their research.

There is a growing realization that KMb is essential for promoting social innovation, informing policy change, and maximizing impact. As such, researchers and research organizations are increasingly expected to engage in the KMb process. Researchers have several options for engaging in KMb activities, which can be added at any stage of the research process and be adapted based on the unique needs and context [3] of the project. KMb activities can include conference presentations, publications, web-based activities, educational materials/sessions, workshops, research summaries, conferences, networking events, communities of practice, and more.

There are two major types of KMb initiatives: end-of-grant KMb and integrated KMb.[4] **End-of-grant KMb plans mobilize findings once the research process is complete.** End-of-grant KMb plans require researchers to share results and implications of their work with those who can use the information. End-of-grant KMb can involve traditional dissemination or more intensive dissemination activities that tailor the message to specific audiences. In contrast, an **integrated KMb plan applies the principles of KMb throughout the research process.**

An integrated approach to KMb allows stakeholders to have a more active role in influencing the KMb outputs, activities, and dissemination plans. **Studies have shown that integrated KMb approaches are more likely to impact policy and practice**. However, integrated KMb also requires increased researcher involvement since the KMb efforts are embedded across research goals, processes, and products. Selecting the appropriate approach requires researchers to consider the nature, scope, size, and objectives of their proposed research.

WHY IS KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION IMPORTANT?

The mobilization of knowledge between researchers and education stakeholders can provide several positive outcomes.[5] Benefits of engaging in the KMb process include:

- Research Benefits – the development of new knowledge; deeper/new partnerships; academic trainees; new methods; new tools; new research questions
- Dissemination Benefits – publications; conferences, workshops; social media; videos; media and public awareness; intellectual property and patents
- Uptake Benefits – validation of research; policy/practice trainees; new research questions, contextualization of research; best practices established; technology license
- Implementation Benefits – research-informed policy, practice, service; new research questions; policy/practice trainees; new program funding; changes in programs; new product developed and brought to market
- Impact – citizens served; improved teaching, learning, and equity outcomes; media and public awareness

Because of these benefits, research funders have become increasingly interested in research that illustrates the potential for practical application and relevant impact.
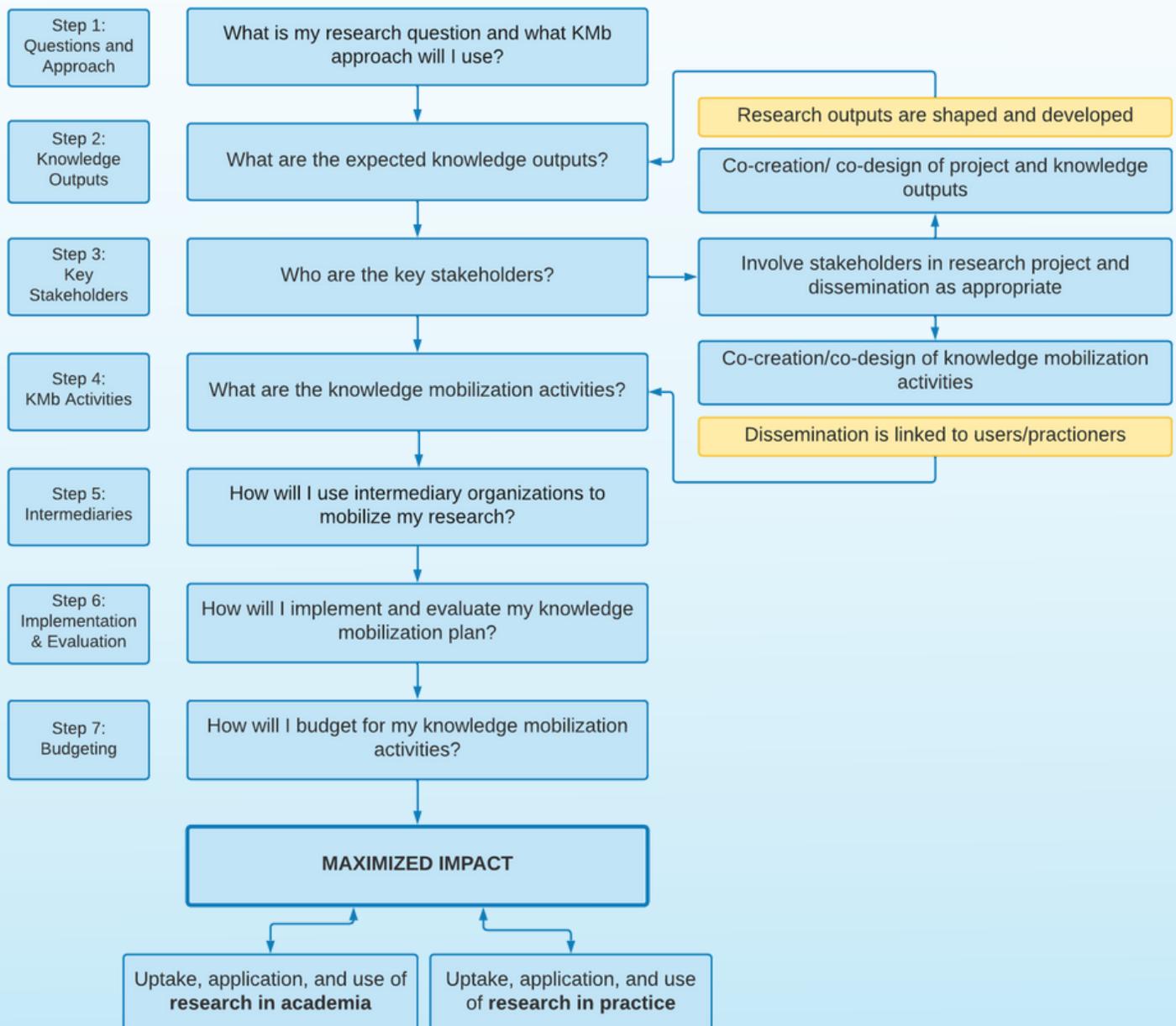
Additionally, funders and recipients of public research funding recognize the need to demonstrate accountability for using public funds to support education stakeholders' broader goals and efforts. Two major funders of education research, the Institute of Education Sciences[6] (IES) and the National Science Foundation[7] (NSF) require grant applicants to describe how the proposed research will contribute to improved outcomes and include dissemination plans that include policymakers and practitioners as primary audiences. A 2022 report[8] by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine on the Future of Education Research at the IES also specifically calls out the importance of knowledge mobilization being integrated into the work of researchers at the outset of projects. **These requirements indicate that KMb is especially important for funders to express the value and benefit of research to citizens.**

To assist University of Delaware researchers in developing KMb plans for their projects, the Partnership for Public Education (PPE) has created this knowledge mobilization guide. We encourage you to utilize the resources provided in this document to guide your KMb planning process, outlined on the following page, by viewing and copying the worksheets linked on page seven.

HOW SHOULD I PLAN FOR KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION?

This guide represents a synthesis of KMb resources from other fields and disciplines and is intended to support education researchers in planning for knowledge mobilization.

Figure 1 below provides a summary of the knowledge mobilization process and the *PPE Knowledge Mobilization Plan* as outlined in this document. Corresponding worksheets for each step illustrated below are provided on the next page.

Step 1: Questions and Approach	What is my research question and what KMb approach will I use?
Step 2: Knowledge Outputs	What are the expected knowledge outputs?
Step 3: Key Stakeholders	Who are the key stakeholders?
Step 4: KMb Activities	What are the knowledge mobilization activities?
Step 5: Intermediaries	How will I use intermediary organizations to mobilize my research?
Step 6: Implementation & Evaluation	How will I implement and evaluate my knowledge mobilization plan?
Step 7: Budgeting	How will I budget for my knowledge mobilization activities?

Research outputs are shaped and developed

Co-creation/ co-design of project and knowledge outputs

Involve stakeholders in research project and dissemination as appropriate

Co-creation/co-design of knowledge mobilization activities

Dissemination is linked to users/practioners

MAXIMIZED IMPACT

Uptake, application, and use of **research in academia**

Uptake, application, and use of **research in practice**

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION WORKSHEETS

Please make a copy of the following worksheets in order to maximize your research impact through the knowledge mobilization process outlined in the figure above.

Step 1: Questions & Approach

Step 2: Knowledge Outputs

Step 3: Key Stakeholders

Step 4: Knowledge Mobilization Activities

Step 5: Intermediaries

Step 6: Implementation & Evaluation

Step 7: Budgeting

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CITED RESOURCES

1. Shaxson, L., Bielak, A., Ahmed, I., Brien, D., Conant, B., Fisher, C., Gwyn, E., Klerkx, L., Middleton, A., Morton, S., Pant, L., & Phipps, D. (2012). Expanding our understanding of K* (KT, KE, KTT, KMb, KB, KM, etc.) United Nations University - Institute for Water, Environment and Health. https://tinyurl.com/55ppvfhv

[from abstract] A concept paper emerging from the K*(KStar) conference held in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, in April 2012. It sets out the core concept and principles of K, in addition to describing a framework for thinking about K*, which will make sharing approaches and lessons learned easier. A series of short case studies from both developing and developed worlds are presented in the paper to demonstrate how different organizations work at the intersection of several different functions simultaneously.

2. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. (2017). Definitions of terms. https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/definitions-eng.aspx#km-mc

The concept of knowledge mobilization was originally introduced by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) in 2001-2002. As such, we adapted SSHRC"s definition for the purpose of this document. This website provides a list of clearly defined key terms (including knowledge mobilization) used by SSHRC.

3. Briggs, G., Briggs, A., Whitmore, E., Maki, A., Ackerley, C., Maisonneuve, A., Yordy, C. (2015). Questing your way to a knowledge mobilization strategy. Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement. https://carleton.ca/communityfirst/wp-content/uploads/KMB-Questing-Your-Way-to-a-KMb-Strategy-Jun-29-2015.pdf

This resource was developed for social science researchers to use when planning for knowledge mobilization.

4. Barwick, M., Dubrowski, R., Petricca, K. (2020). Knowledge translation: The rise of implementation. American Institutes for Research. https://ktdrr.org/products/kt-implementation/KT-Implementation-508.pdf

In this narrative systematic review, the authors provide an update of the knowledge translation (a synonym for KMb) and reflect on the advancements in knowledge translation (KT), as well as KT's relationship with implementation science. In addition, the authors highlight KT strategies related to disability research and discuss possible future directions for the field of KT.

5. Phipps, D., Cummins, J., Pepler, D. J., Craig, W., & Cardinal, S. (2016). The co-produced pathway to impact describes knowledge mobilization processes. Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship, 9(1), 5. https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/jces/vol9/iss1/5/

In this article, the authors present a framework for describing knowledge mobilization processes and potential benefits (e.g., benefits related to research, policy, practice, economy, and society) throughout the stages of research, dissemination, uptake, and implementation.

6. Institute of Education Sciences. (2021). Dissemination plan template. Regional Educational Laboratory Central. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/central/resources/pemtoolkit/pdf/module-8/CE5.3.2-Dissemination-Plan-Template.pdf

This document provides researchers with a template to use when creating dissemination plans required for IES grant applications

7. National Science Foundation. (2020). Proposal and award policies and procedures guide. https://nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg20_1/nsf20_1.pdf

[from Forward, p. x] The Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) is comprised of documents relating to the Foundation's proposal and award process for the assistance programs of NSF.

8. National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2022). The future of education research at IES: Advancing an equity-oriented science. https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/the-future-of-education-research-at-the-institute-of-education-sciences-in-the-us-department-of-education

[from abstract] In response to a request from the Institute of Education Sciences, this report provides guidance on the future of education research at the National Center for Education Research and the National Center for Special Education Research, two centers directed by IES. This report identifies critical problems and issues, new methods and approaches, and new and different kinds of research training investments.

9. Department of Agriculture, Food, and Marine. (2020). Knowledge transfer and exchange guidance. https://assets.gov.ie/109012/614d1a79-4630-4b62-b137-94e04153a940.pdf

This resource was developed for researchers to use when developing knowledge transfer plans as part of grant submissions to the Department of Agriculture, Food, and Marine in Ireland. The figure featured on page 4 of this guide was adapted from this source.

10. Alberta Health Services. (2010). Knowledge translation planning tools for addiction and mental health researchers. https://www.colleaga.org/sites/default/files/attachments/if-res-mhr-kt-planning-tools.pdf

This resource was developed for mental health and addiction researchers to use when planning for knowledge translation (a synonym of KMb)

11. Girard, M. (2020). Knowledge mobilization needs assessment survey toolkit. Research Impact Canada. https://ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/40775

[from abstract] This toolkit will allow other organizations and academic institutions to undertake a knowledge mobilization needs assessment survey and to use the results of the survey to inform decisions and improvements in the organization's knowledge mobilization support services. It contains guidelines, survey questions, and templates to adapt and use.

12. Cooper, A. (2014). Knowledge mobilisation in education across Canada: A cross-case analysis of 44 research brokering organisations. Evidence & Policy, 10(1), 29-59. https://doi.org/10.1332/174426413X662806

In this article, the author presents a typology of research brokering organizations (governmental, non-profit, for-profit, and membership), organizational features (mission statements, target audiences, size, scope, operating expenses, KMb efforts) of research brokering organizations (RBOs), and eight brokering functions (linkage and partnerships, awareness, accessibility, engagement, capacity building, implementation support, organizational development, and policy influence) of RBOs.

13. Cooper, A. & Shewchuk, S. (2016). A menu of indicators to assess research impact. Research Informing Policy, Practice, and Leadership in Education. https://www.ripplenetwork.ca/resource/taxonomy-of-indicators-for-social-sciences/

This taxonomy includes 400+ indicators aggregated from an environmental scan of research impact resources across Canada, the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Indicators are categorized in relation to scholarship, capacity building, economy, society and culture, practice, and policy.

14. Phipps, D., Jensen, K. E., Johnny, M., & Poetz, A. (2016). Supporting Knowledge Mobilization and Research Impact Strategies in Grant Applications. Journal of Research Administration, 47(2), 49-67. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1152268.pdf

In this article, the authors describe how the Knowledge Mobilization Unit at York University has supported and built the capacity of researchers to develop and implement KMb strategies. In addition, the authors identify the common characteristics of strong and weak KMb plans.

15. Barwick, M. (n.d.) Knowledge translation planning template. Hospital for Sick Children. https://www.sickkids.ca/contentassets/4ba06697e24946439d1d6187ddcb7def/79482-ktplanningtemplate.pdf

[from instructions] This template was designed to assist with the development of knowledge translation plans for research or non-research projects.