

Knowledge Mobilization at York University

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



From research to impact



Knowledge Mobilization at York University

This year was the 10th anniversary of York University's Knowledge Mobilization Unit. It allowed us to look back on how we have grown to a national leader in institutional knowledge mobilization services and serves as a spring board for us to deepen our local and international connections. Since 2006, we have helped support almost 500 requests for collaboration, which has resulted in over 175 projects and over 120 collaborative activities. We have worked with over 340 faculty members, over 230 graduate students and our work has engaged almost 320 community organizations from York Region, the Greater Toronto Area and across Ontario in research partnership opportunities.

Knowledge Mobilization helps to maximize the economic, social and environmental impacts of York's research enterprise.

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Services

Brokering Services

Central to the work of the Knowledge Mobilization Unit at York University is brokering collaborative research projects and activities. We seek to connect York University researchers (faculty and graduate students) with community organizations, business and industry leaders, and policy professionals in all levels of government. Our knowledge brokers help support researchers to build a mutually beneficial relationship with prospective non-academic partners.

York's leadership within the ResearchImpact network also opens up collaborative opportunities across the country. Knowledge brokers at 12 Canadian universities support relationship building and collaborative project development across the country.

Grant Support

Knowledge mobilization (KMb), often known as knowledge translation (KT) in Health, is increasingly important in research in Canada. Granting councils are seeking a clear and comprehensive KMb or KT plan for all grant applications. Staff within the Knowledge Mobilization Unit at York are trained to provide assistance for researchers and their project team in the development of a tailored KMb or KT plan. We provide training and support, and in some cases, in-kind service support for projects. We also review and provide feedback on all KMb plans prior to their submission.

Events

Knowledge mobilization is a social process, therefore meeting and interacting with stakeholders is an important approach to engagement, partnership building and impact. The Knowledge Mobilization Unit at York has tools to support research teams in developing and delivering events for researchers and collaborators that will produce positive results. We can also provide access to technological tools to strengthen these events and outreach capacity.

Capacity Building

The Knowledge Mobilization Unit at York provides learning opportunities for York researchers, staff, graduate students and external partners to help make research relevant to professional practice and policy development. We also deliver customized learning sessions to research teams to provide information, skills and experience in knowledge mobilization.



KMb Activities

Brokering Services	2006-2016	2015-2016
Collaborative Opportunities	497	30
KMb Projects	178	3
KMb Activities	121	9
Partnership Organizations	321	25 (11 new)
Faculty Engaged in KMb	344	18 (new)
Grad Students Engaged in KMb	234	48
Grant Support	2006-2016	2015-2016
Faculty Grant Team Support	138	17
Community Funding	\$1.14M	\$0K
Contract Funding	\$1.53M	\$300K
Federal Research Funding	\$41.95M	\$1.35M
Total KMb Funding	\$47.5M	\$4.6M
Capacity Building	2006-2016	2015-2016
On-Campus Sessions	368	34
Off-Campus Sessions	345	36
Research Summaries	359	21

Website and Social Media Analytics

	2006-2016
Blog Posts	593
Blog Views	172K
Website Visits	57K
Tweets	18.1K
Twitter Followers	7.1K
YouTube Views	8.5K
SlideShare Views	32.9K
LinkedIn Group Members	530

Success Story

York Region Food Network

At a glance

Issues around a sustainable and healthy food system are central to the work of the York Region Food Network (YRFN). YRFN approached the KMb Unit in the spring of 2012 with a request for student support to research food charter policy development in other jurisdictions. YRFN, in partnership with community and regional agencies in York Region, wanted to lead the development of a Food Charter to establish a vision of food and agriculture in York Region to then support the development of an enabling policy framework. This regional policy framework was seen as central to move forward food system objectives within York Region.

The rest of the story

The research support provided by Prof. Rod MacRae from York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies, along with a United Way York Region Strength Investment, operational leadership and a committed Food Charter Working Group developed and delivered a Food Charter for York Region in Spring 2013.

The charter is a guiding document for the development of coordinated food-related policies and services in York Region. Since its inception in 2012, it has formally been adopted by eight Committees and Councils throughout York Region. Other highlights around the impact of this work are as follows:

- » Leveraged over \$375,000 in programs, research and policy development funds
- » Helped support 12 community food projects
- » Enabled over 50 community partnerships for the purposes of advancing food policy

Development of the Food Charter has been seminal work for YRFN. In 2013, building on the success and priority identification of the Food Charter, YRFN was successful in securing an Ontario Centres of Excellence grant supporting research and development around



Steven Looi, UpStream Aquaponics

a vibrant Aquaponics lab in Newmarket. This social venture enabled YRFN to explore new community engagement opportunities through a pilot urban agriculture demonstration hub.

“Since 2011, we have been working to push forward a food systems approach at the regional and municipal levels, while also assisting the community to support food programs that make it easier for people to grow, prepare, eat and share food in their communities” - YRFN

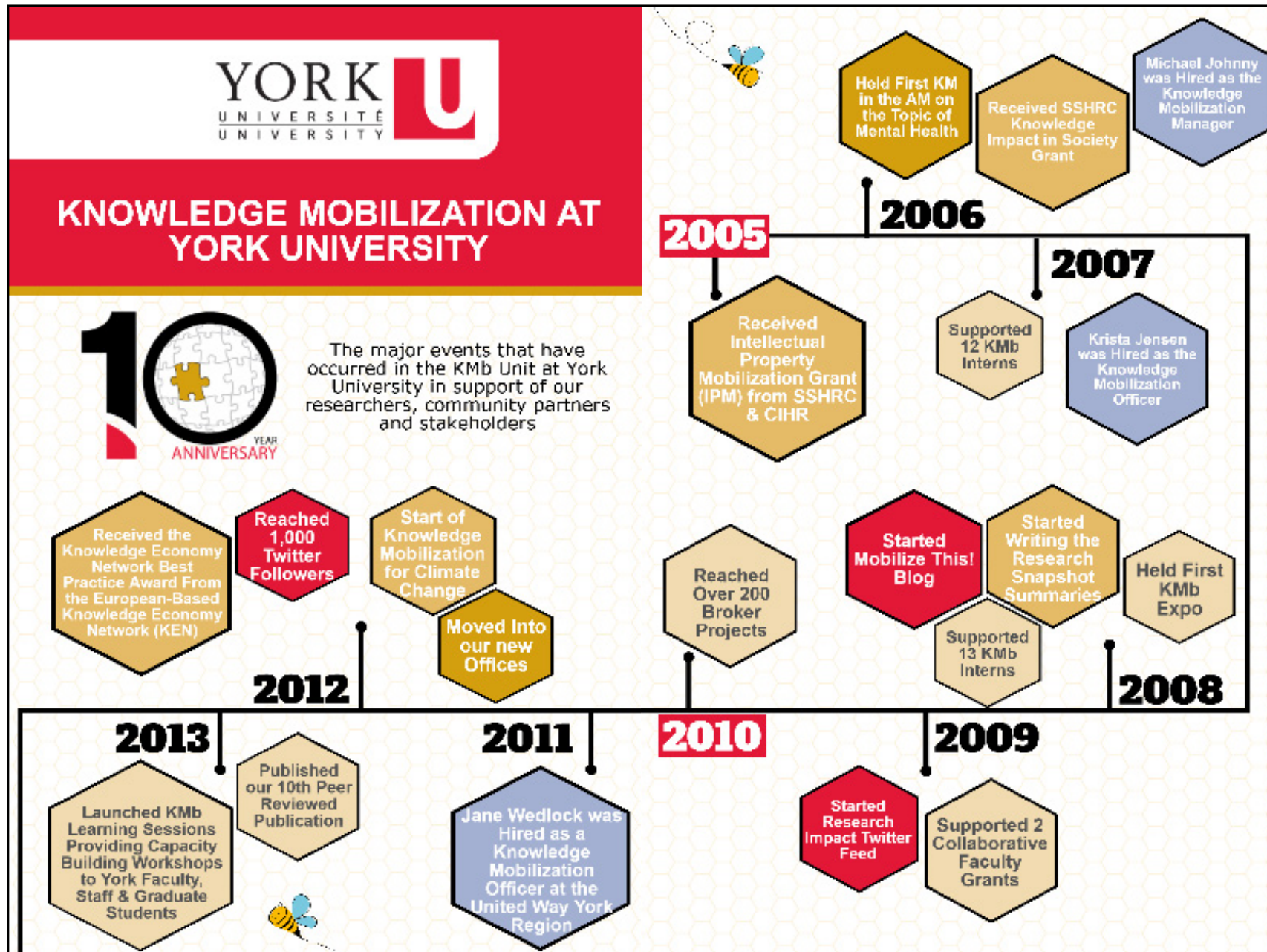
Fast forward

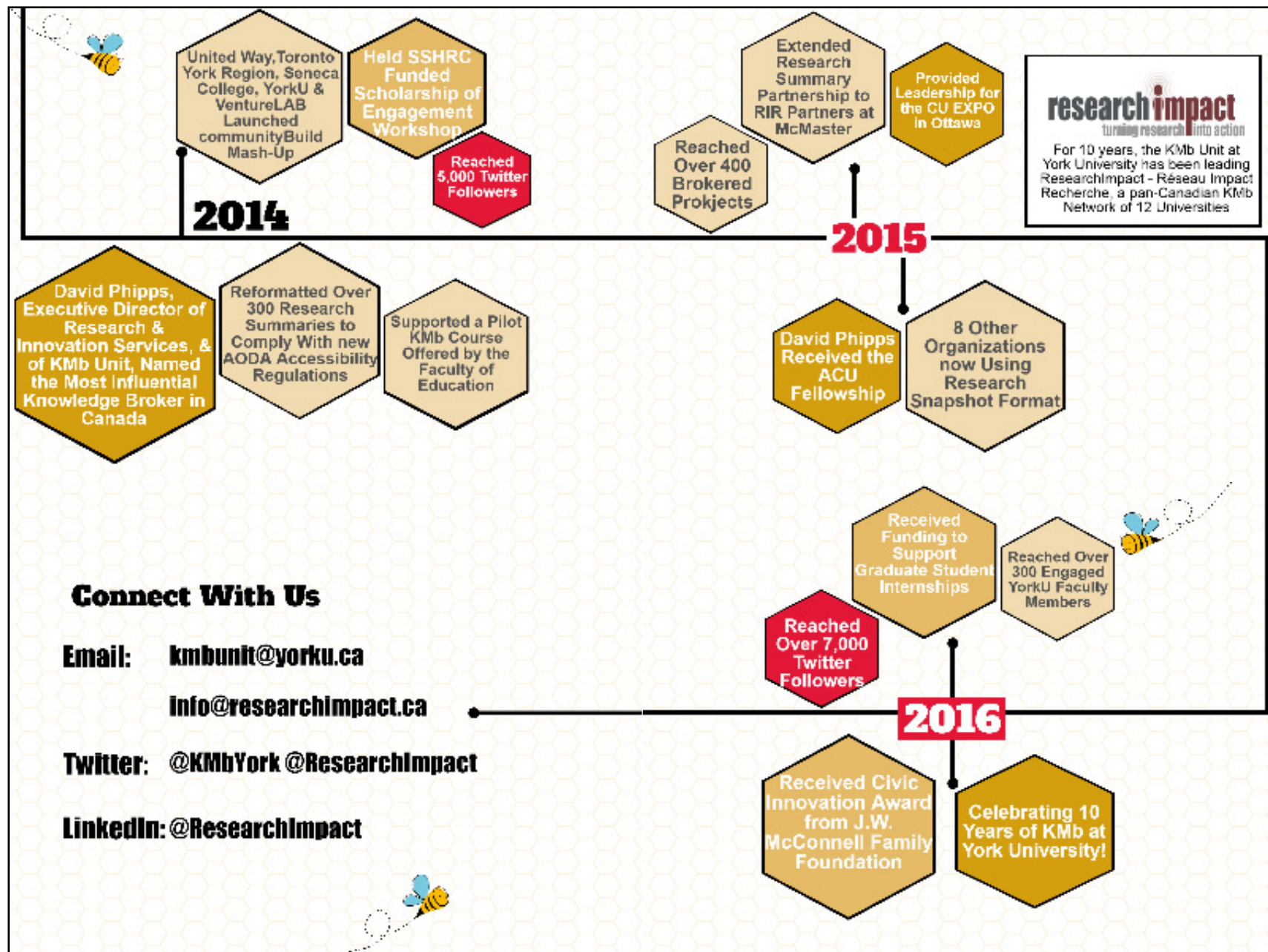
For YRFN, development of the Food Charter has enabled the organization to assert itself into broader conversations of stronger, healthier and more prosperous communities across York Region. Their most recent 5th annual Food for Change event engaged Dr. Rod MacRae from York's Faculty of Environmental Studies. His messages, drawn from his research about food policy development at a systems level reinforced the messages and values of YRFN.

While four regional municipalities have formally adopted the Food Charter, this ongoing connection with leading research can help YRFN as it advances its work throughout the Region and beyond.



KMb at York University Infographic

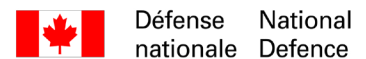




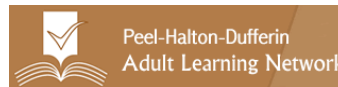
Thanks to Meghan Terry for developing this infographic

Partner Organizations in 2006-2016

These are just a selection of the over 320 organizations we have had the pleasure to collaborate with over the past 10 years. Thanks to the organizations below for reaching out to York's Knowledge Mobilization Unit.



Partner Organizations in 2006-2016



KMb Outreach and Engagement

Highlights

2006: First KM in the AM on Mental Health

2007: Funded 12 KMb Interns

2008: First York KMb Expo featuring Angie Hart (University of Brighton, UK) and community partner Kim Aumann, Community University Partnership Program

2009: First peer reviewed article: Phipps D. & Shapson S. (2009). Knowledge mobilization builds local research collaborations for social innovation. *Evidence & Policy*, 5(3), 211-227.

2011: RIR Invited by SSHRC to meet with Governor General and United Way Centraide Canada to develop the Community Campus Collaborations initiative

2013: York U KMb Unit received Global Best Practices Award from the EU based Knowledge Economy Network

2014: Social Innovation for Canadian Children & Youth - presentations by RIR universities/partners on Parliament Hill at invitation of Senator Kelvin Ogilvie

2014: York KMb Unit invited by Canadian High Commission to partner with Oxford and Harvard to examine institutional supports for social innovation

2015: David Phipps is awarded an Association of Commonwealth Universities Fellowship

2015: York KMb Unit invited to host 5th Annual Canadian KMb Forum

Key Presentations

2006: Inaugural presentation to the Human Services Planning Board at the Regional Municipality of York

2008: Introduction to KMb and KMb Services for United Way member Executive Directors

2010: Krista Jensen presents a poster about the KMb Internship experience at the 4th Living

Knowledge Conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland

2011: David Phipps deliver closing keynote presentation at first Canadian KMb Forum

2011: First International Presentation: Richard Austin, Pimjai Sudsawad and David Phipps, The Knowledge Translation Divide: What's the Canadian Secret? Atlanta

2011: First UK Presentation: Sarah Morton and David Phipps. What makes a good knowledge broker? Reflections on qualities and skills for bridging the gap between research, policy and practice: The importance of intermediaries (knowledge brokers) in producing research impact. London, UK

2012: Michael Johnny present keynote speech at the CESBA Conference

2013: Jane Wedlock and Michael Johnny present at the 3rd Canadian Knowledge Mobilization Forum in Mississauga

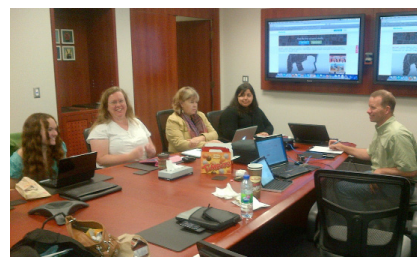
2015: Michael Johnny delivers training for the Network Centre of Excellence

2015: David Phipps and Michael Johnny present to Osgoode graduate students and student for a day York University President Mamdouh Shoukri

2016: David Phipps invited by National Institutes of Health Research (UK) to present international perspectives on research impact frameworks

2016: RIR invited to present on national policies for research impact at US National Alliance for Broader Impacts Summit

10 Years of KMb at York University



Manifesto for Partnership Research

The Centre for Research in Families and Relationships (U. Edinburgh) invited York to engage the RIR network in a collaboration with the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (UK) to develop a Manifesto for Partnership Research. RIR units provided input to the text and the images to develop a manifesto that guides academic and non-academic partners through the principles of partnered research. This was a very welcome example of the international reputation of York University's Knowledge Mobilization Unit and the RIR Network.

Manifesto for partnership research between academic and other organisations

- 1 Identifying the partners**
 - Build a network of potential partners and be open to opportunities
 - Publicise that you want to work in partnership
 - Involve people early on - all partners should have an opportunity to shape the research process and any funding applications
 - Remember it's a two-way process: languages of exchange rather than transfer
- 2 Starting partnerships**
 - Think about what you want to gain from and what you want to contribute to partnership research
 - Define what partnership means: be clear about the difference between partnership research and consultancy, commissioning and evaluation
 - Start conversations early and take time to understand each other's language and motivations
 - Ask what knowledge and capacity partners already have and don't assume knowledge/capacity on either side
 - Have clear terms of reference with clear roles and ways of resolving disagreement
 - Have a conversation about what you might and might not find out
 - Explore and develop the different perspectives on what makes good evidence
 - Acknowledge that all partners will have costs associated with taking part
 - Agree what a successful partnership looks like for each partner
- 3 Developing funding bids**
 - Negotiate costs openly, and ensure appropriate resources for participation
 - Properly fund knowledge exchange activities to ensure impact
 - Think about the ethics from different perspectives – who will be involved as research participants and what effect will it have on them?
 - Agree how the partnership will be evaluated and how success will be measured
 - Be realistic about deadlines and what you can deliver on
 - Identify what parts of the research process your organisation can be involved in
- 4 Developing partnerships**
 - Have an open mind about what the partnership might involve
 - Spend time in each other's organisations to understand each other's contexts, challenges and enablers
 - Take turns to host meetings
 - Question each other's assumptions and be prepared for conflict!
 - Address power dynamics
 - Be clear about which roles will be shared and to what extent
 - Explore what training needs exist within the partnership to best support the research process
 - Be open to different interpretations of data and have a process for agreeing
 - Commit time and have a back-up plan if people and roles change
- 5 Sharing research findings**
 - Agree on reporting roles and styles and share authorship if possible
 - Circulate research widely and share with colleagues, and other relevant organisations – be creative
 - Split engagement roles – media / engagement
 - Give all partners the opportunity to pre-approve publications, and respect each other's points of view
- 6 And finally**
 - Choose your partners carefully – it will work better if you get on
 - Do reflect on the process – be honest about what is good and what is challenging for each partner
 - Think about what impact you are making and how you can show it – feedback from service users can be helpful

Student Profile

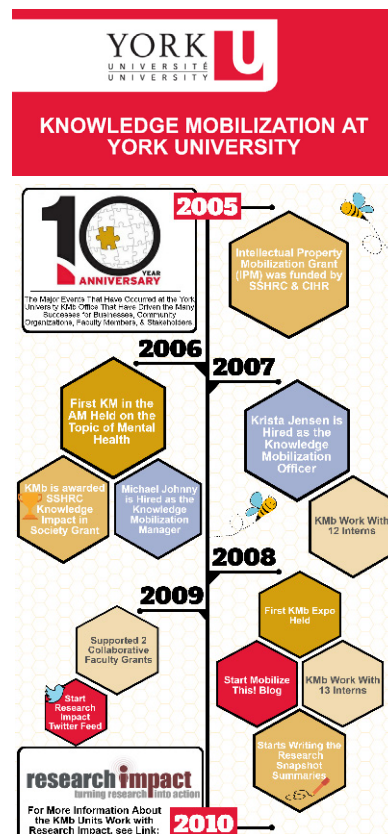
Meghan Terry

When I started working at the KMb Unit, I didn't know much about knowledge mobilization or even all the work involved. Fast forward a year or so later and I am still discovering more and more about the importance of it and all the hard work and effort required from the KMb Unit.



Throughout the year, my position has required me to participate and volunteer at knowledge mobilization conferences; such as the Knowledge Mobilization Forum, to develop knowledge translation projects, such as infographics, videos, etc., as well as regularly update and track the social media pages. One project in particular that I am proud of was the development of the 10th anniversary infographic and video, not only was I able to learn when and how the unit started, but also to see how far their work has

come and how it has improved research and the community.



As a fourth year undergraduate, I found working at the KMb office has been a great learning experience; I have met a lot of people in the knowledge mobilization field, worked hands on with the offices' projects, and witnessed the hard-work and dedication that goes on at the KMb Unit. Through the past year, I was able to take the tools and knowledge I learned from working at the KMb Unit and apply it to my assignments and class discussions. I look forward to seeing where this position will take me and how the KMb Unit at York University will improve knowledge translation, research and innovation.

ResearchImpact-RéseauImpactRecherche

Led by York University, ResearchImpact-RéseauImpactRecherche (RIR) is Canada's knowledge mobilization network including universities from across Canada who are investing in supports for knowledge mobilization, community based research and public engagement. This year was a year of digging in and reinventing how we operated. While continuing to support knowledge mobilization and related services on our campuses and in our communities the RIR staff identified that we needed a more comprehensive governance structure. We previously had two working groups: knowledge brokers and RIR Directors. As we engaged in more collaborative activities we realized this artificial distinction based on roles at our own institutions was not translating into those who were actually doing the different tasks required to continue to develop the RIR network. We developed a new governance structure based on tasks including committees on Governance (reporting to the Executive Lead Steering Committee), Communications, Professional Development and Evaluation. This governance structure was presented to the network members in April and will guide our development moving forward.

The Evaluation Committee created the mechanism to assess our progress against our vision, "*We will maximize the impact of university research for the social, cultural, economic, environmental, and health benefits across local and global communities.*" The Evaluation Committee adapted the Impact Case Study template from the UK Research Excellence Framework to capture and present the evidence of impacts of research. In 2016-2017 we will move this from design to prototype to implementation.

We were pleased to continue our presentations at the Canadian Knowledge Mobilization Forum (Montréal) Canadian Association of Research Administrators (Toronto), the Congress of the Social Sciences & Humanities (Ottawa), the Canadian Science Policy Conference (Ottawa) and the Community University Expo (Ottawa). Although most were in Ottawa these national level conferences provide a high level of visibility for our work.



We were happy to welcome our 12th university member, University of New Brunswick. UNB hosts the New Brunswick Social Policy Research Network and brings a welcome policy lens to RIR. Announcing this new membership David Burns, VP Research for UNB said, "UNB is delighted to join ResearchImpact. We have already established our knowledge mobilization practices on campus by leading a number of entrepreneurship initiatives such as the NB Social Policy Research Network and the Pond Deshpande Centre which are helping us connect our campus to innovation and entrepreneurship across New Brunswick. We look forward to learning from the diverse knowledge mobilization practices of the ResearchImpact members across Canada and sharing our work here in New Brunswick."

UNB is hosting the 2016 RIR Network meeting in September. Such a great contribution from a new RIR member!

Acknowledgements and Thanks

Our work and our success is the result of strong leadership, integral partnerships, skilled and passionate researchers and a staff team who bring dedication and professionalism to their work.

The successes of the Knowledge Mobilization Unit would not be possible without the support and leadership of Robert Haché, VP Research & Innovation at York University. He continues to guide our work and look for opportunities to grow the connections locally, nationally and internationally. Under his leadership our work is represented in York's University Academic Plan 2015-2020 under Priority 2: Advancing Exploration, Innovation and Achievement in Scholarship, Research and related Creative Activities. In the next five years York will, among other commitments, "Enhance the quality and quantity of research and knowledge mobilization aimed at shaping the public debate, law and policy reform, social and economic enterprise, and improving the outcomes of York research for society".

We thank our colleagues at the 11 other RIR universities for their collaboration, contributions and critical friendship as we seek to lead growth of institutional knowledge mobilization across Canada. Thanks to Memorial University of Newfoundland, University of New Brunswick, Université du Québec à Montréal, Université du Montréal, Carleton University, University of Guelph, McMaster University, Wilfrid Laurier University, University of Saskatchewan, Kwantlen Polytechnic University and the University of Victoria.

It is wonderful to continue to work with Anneliese Poetz, KT Manager, NeuroDevNet (a national Network of Centres of Excellence focusing on childhood neurodevelopmental disorders) who is hosted in York's Knowledge Mobilization Unit and contributes much to our work by collaborating on annotated bibliographies ("Guide of Guides") on stakeholder engagement, infographics and KT/KMb Planning.

Special thanks to the entire team within the Knowledge Mobilization Unit – David Phipps (Executive Director, Research and Innovation Services); Michael Johnny (Manager, Knowledge Mobilization); Krista Jensen (Knowledge Mobilization Officer); Meghan Terry (Data and Communications Assistant); and Rebecca Giblon (Research Translation Assistant).

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