

Appendix 03
**Inventory of Models and Practices in Community Focused Social Sciences
and Humanities Research Program of Research**

LETTER OF INFORMATION

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Purpose of the Study:

Our research team is engaging academic stakeholders in Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts (SSHA) and leaders and administrators in community engagement offices across Canadian universities in a study to identify current models and practices around community-focused knowledge mobilisation in SSHA. From the study, we hope to generate an inventory of knowledge mobilisation practices that can go toward the creation of an assessment framework and a series of case studies to illustrate best practices.

Knowledge mobilisation (Kmb) is a topic of increasing importance in higher education policy. Kmb practices serve the transfer and dissemination of knowledge created in universities to end-users in the community. This project aims to connect with Kmb practitioners to define the scope of community-focused Kmb initiatives in academia, identifying what is currently being done and what drivers and barriers exist. The outcome will provide evidence needed for the articulation of a national strategy and, along the way, offer lessons about how to effectively support Kmb practices in SSHA across Canada.

Research Activities:

This study involves a two part online survey using the LimeSurvey platform that together will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Participants in positions of administration, or who work within a knowledge mobilisation or community engagement department on their campus (e.g., SSHA Leadership, Knowledge Mobilisation Unit) will be asked to complete Part 1 and 2. Participants who are not in such positions (e.g., SSHA Faculty) will be asked to complete Part 2 only.

Part 1:

Part 1 will ask participants to identify their institution and comment on information our research team has gathered about their institution's knowledge mobilisation activities in SSHA. This information was gathered by our team between December 2021 and May 2022 by a systematic survey of all websites associated with a Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts Faculty in every Canadian university. The search was conducted using a string of key terms through Google's advanced search engine, and targeted individual SSHA departments' and faculty websites' URL in every Canadian university.

The result of this scan is a provisional version of an inventory of community-engaged/experiential education programs, community-engaged research centres, programs and initiatives as well as a number of other items such as community-engaged researcher profiles and experiential courses on offer, for instance. Participants will be asked to correct or provide additional information to what our team has gathered about their institution.

Part 2

For participants who have completed Part 1 and continue to Part 2 and/or for participants who are asked to complete Part 2 only, we will ask general questions about their perceptions of drivers and barriers to community-focused knowledge mobilisation in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts at their institution. For example, "My institution rewards knowledge mobilisation" with 6 options to note their agreement or disagreement with the statement. Part 2 will finish with demographic questions (e.g., age range, gender identity).

Confidentiality:

Every effort will be made to protect your confidentiality and privacy, and we will only use aggregated data and de-identified descriptors in the reports we create based on our findings. If you provide specific information about community-focused knowledge mobilisation initiatives in your Faculty/University in Part 1, we will only use it to complete our scan and the source of the information will not be shared with anyone beyond the research team, whose names are listed above. In our study reports we will not indicate

which information about specific Kmb initiatives was acquired through our scan and which was acquired through Part 1 of the survey.

Only the research team will have access to the data collected, and in our reports we will only use aggregated de-identified data. However, people are often identifiable through the stories we tell, even with names and places removed, so please keep this in mind when deciding what to tell us.

In our survey we are not asking for any directly identifying information. However, through the combination of variables such as your role, institution, age range, gender, race, etc. it is possible that your data could be indirectly identifiable. Although no one beyond the immediate research team members listed here will have access to the raw data, please keep this in mind when deciding which questions to answer.

Immediately following the survey, participants will have the option to provide their email address if they wish to be informed of findings and/or contacted to participate in follow up research activities (e.g., an interview). Should you do so, your email address will not be associated with survey responses and is separate at the point of collection.

The research team will undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of the survey responses. When storing and sending documents with potentially identifiable research data, the research team will only use encrypted and password protected files on MacDrive, a McMaster secured platform. Beyond only using aggregated data and de-identified descriptors in our reports, the research team will seek to remove potentially indirectly-identifying details and question results (e.g., in the case of a small sample size) before sharing the results through reports or publication. The data will be kept until September 2027.

Your choice to participate or not in this study will have no impact on your relationship with McMaster University.

Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts:

When sharing information over the internet, there is always a slight risk of it being intercepted by a third party, and this may cause anxiety. Though the possibility of psychological risk obtaining is not significant, we have taken a number of steps to protect the privacy of participants, including using secured storage (MacDrive), a McMaster University-licensed survey platform (LimeSurvey), and collecting and storing email addresses for follow up separately.

In the unlikely event that the online content is intercepted by a third party, it is possible that answers to the different survey questions can be combined to identify the

participant. Depending on what the participant shared (e.g., their perception about their organization's incentives for Kmb), it may be the case that this results in harm to their reputation.

We remind participants that participation is entirely voluntary and they are free to stop answering survey questions at any time and their data will not be used, or skip questions they don't feel comfortable answering with no consequences.

Potential Benefits:

Ultimately, this research aims to inform efforts to build more capacity for Kmb among universities and our communities, which may indirectly benefit participants. However, participants may not benefit directly from participating in the study.

Information about study results:

Information about study results will be sent to participants if they provide their email at the end of the survey and indicate that they wish to be informed about study results.

Participation and Withdrawal:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you decide to be part of the study, you can stop answering the survey questions (withdraw) for whatever reason at any time, even after giving your consent or part-way through the survey by selecting "quit" or by simply closing your screen, at which point your data will be deleted and not included in the study. You may also choose to skip a question should you wish. There will be no consequences to you in either case. It is not possible to withdraw your data after submitting your survey response, because we will not be able to identify which responses are yours to delete.

Questions about the Study:

If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact the PI, Dr. Lapointe, or any member of the research team whose names and emails are included at the top of this document.

This study has been reviewed by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance (#5545). If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
C/o Research Office for Administrative Development and Support
E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca