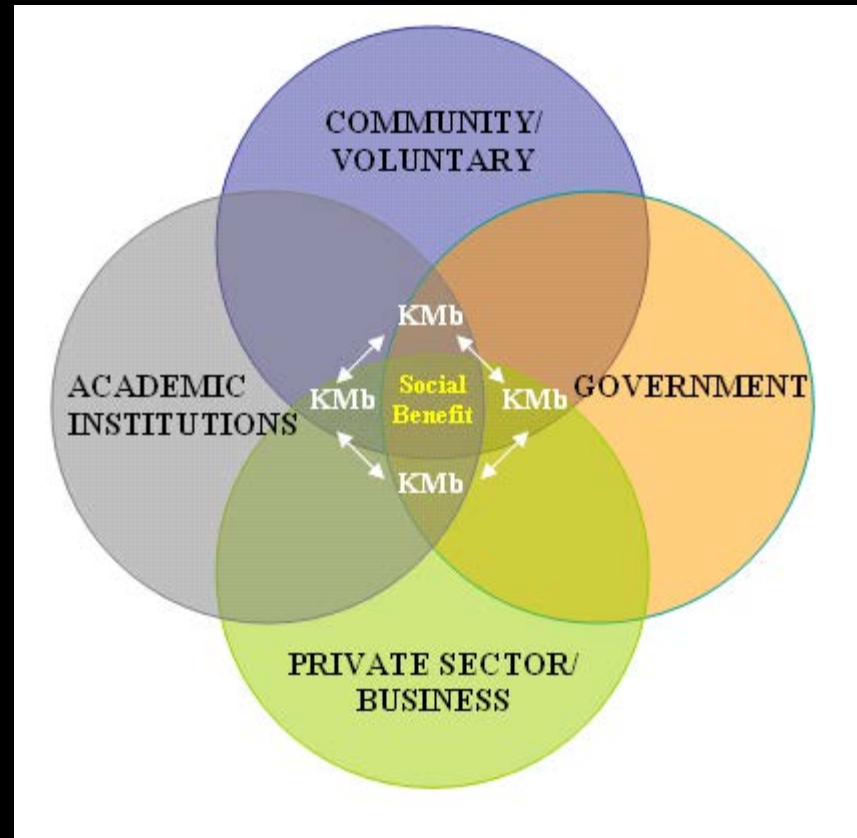# Knowledge Mobilization:
How to ensure that research has impact

Ruth Knechtel, Ph.D.

Office of Research

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Ruth Knechtel is a Senior Manager handling all SSHRC applications and all Social Sciences and Humanities Non-Profit Sponsor contracts. She has been at the University of Waterloo since 2015. Previously, she was at Laurier as the SSHRC Manager, at UAlberta as a Project Manager, UManitoba as a Post-Doctoral Fellow, and various other Universities as an instructor. She advises on, reviews and submits all SSHRC grants for faculty members at the University.

Agenda

- What is Knowledge Mobilization (KMB)/ Knowledge Translation (KT)?

- Two types of KMB/KT

- Examples of effective KMB/KT

Knowledge Mobilization Definition

SSHRC defines KMB as: "an umbrella term encompassing a wide range of activities relating to the production and use of research results, including knowledge synthesis, dissemination, transfer, exchange, and co-creation or co-production"

- To whom should research results be communicated?

- How is the process of communicating research results best mapped?

- How will the proposed knowledge mobilization activities advance the stated research goals?

- Will interactions with knowledge users be fed into research design?

- How will interactions be sustained beyond the life of the project?

Source: http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/knowledge_mobilisation-mobilisation_des_connaissances-eng.aspx

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Knowledge Translation

CIHR defines KT as:

– "a dynamic and iterative process that includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically sound application of knowledge to improve the health of Canadians, provide more effective health services and products and strengthen the health care system."

It is a complex process that involves a range of interactions between researchers and knowledge users.

Source: http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45321.html

Two Kinds of KMB

Integrated KMB

The researcher engages potential knowledge users as partners in the research process. This requires a collaborative or participatory approach to research that is action-oriented.
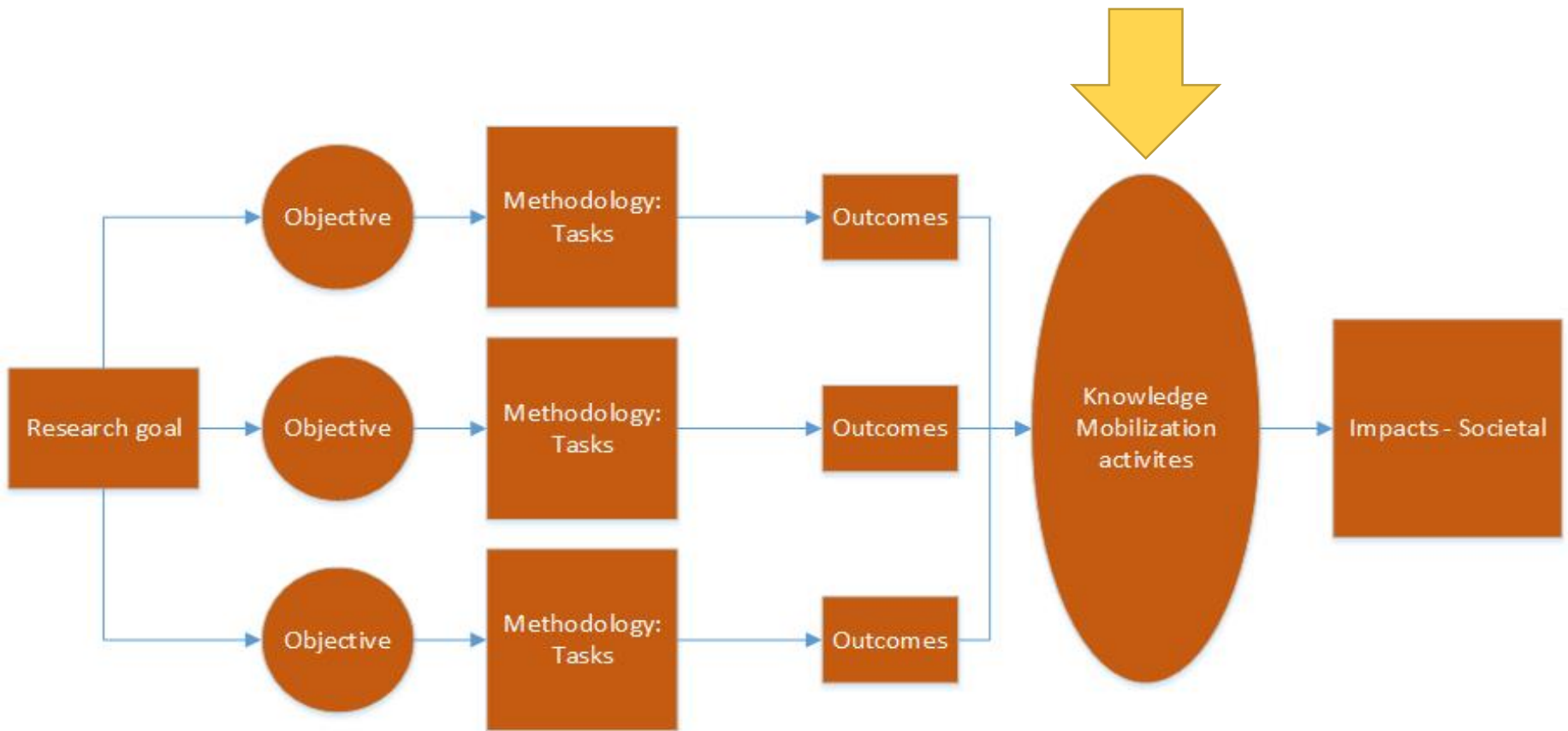
End-of-Research KMB

The researcher develops and implements a plan for making potential users aware of the knowledge being generated.

Start of research

End of research

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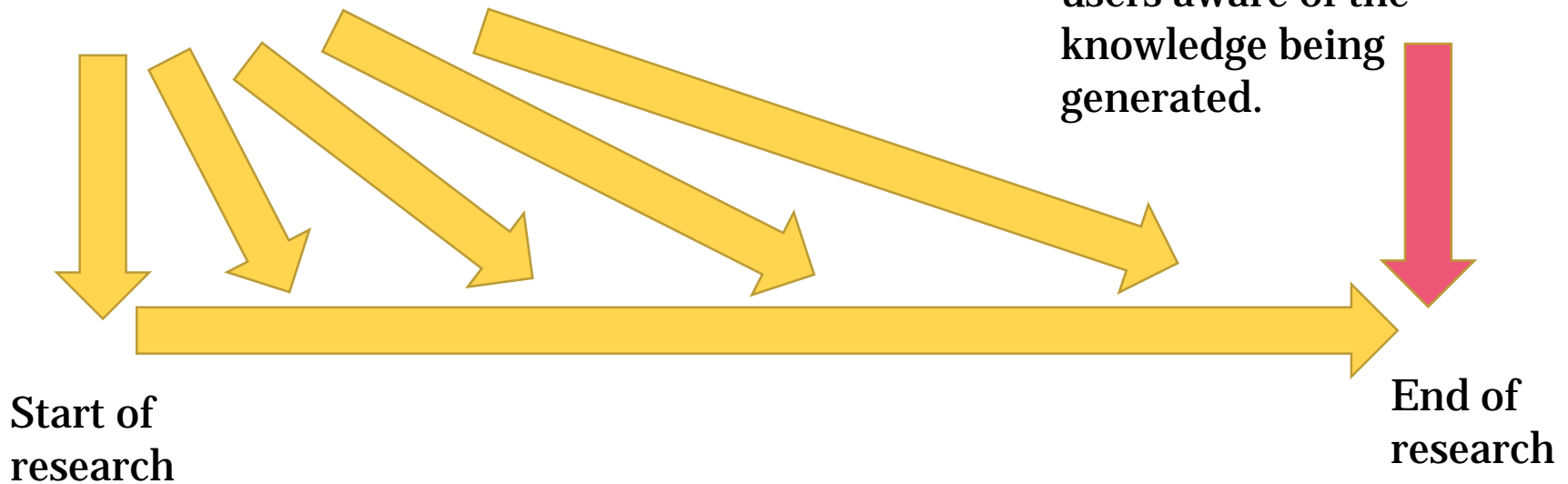
Integrated KMB

- How can your methods impact your knowledge users?

- Who are your participants and how will they be working with you in data collection?

- How will data collection methods impact their lives (new skills, new strategies, new knowledge)?

- Who might benefit from findings in an ongoing manner?

- Will you be producing knowledge that is useful even in a preliminary state?

- Integrated KMB can be thought of as the co-creation of knowledge

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Developing an outline of your research plan

Research goal → Objective → Methodology: Tasks → Outcomes → Knowledge Mobilization activites → Impacts - Societal

Step 1: identify the knowledge gap, problem or challenge. This becomes your research goal.

Step 2: Define the objectives. Objectives are the larger steps, problems, areas of research that you will undertake to solve the goal.

Step 3: Develop the Methodology. Define the tasks or steps that you will undertake to accomplish each of the objectives.

Step 4: Determine the results of each objective. These are your outcomes.

Step 5: Identify the audience(s) who will be interested in your research outcomes. Your knowledge mobilization activities should target them.

Step 6: Impacts are the results of your knowledge mobilization activities through your audience(s)..

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Credit to Kim Arnold – University of Waterloo

End-of-research KMB

One: Research Outcome

- What is your key message?

Two: Audience

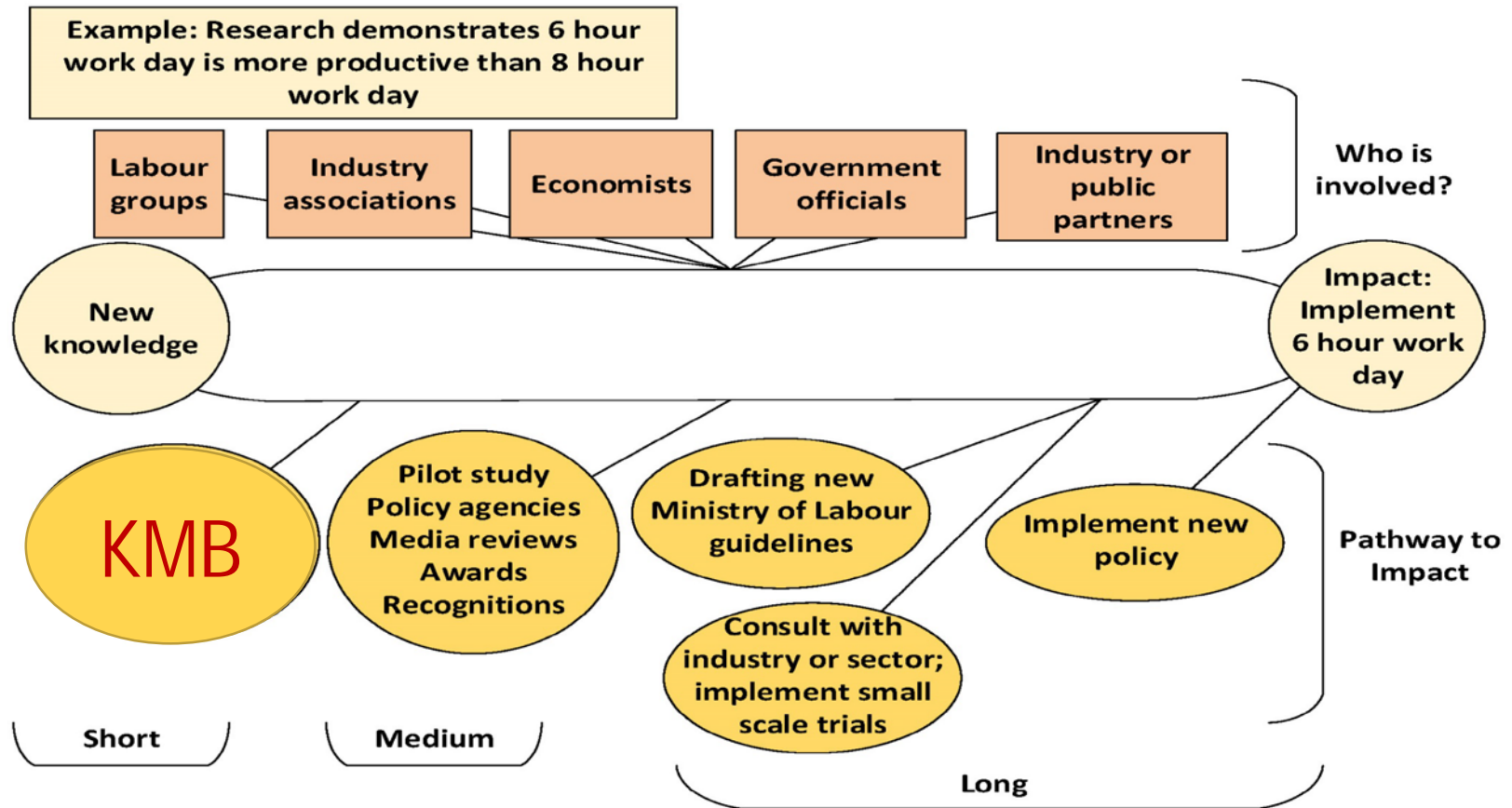- Who are they (be specific)? Why them?

Three: Audience Reach

- How do you reach them? Are there barriers to access? How to overcome? How will you reach them in the short and long term? What budget do you have to reach them? At what stage of the research will you reach them?

Four: Evaluation

- How to evaluate the impact of your KMB (past and going forward). Don't wait until the end of the grant to do this.

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Example:

Example: Research demonstrates 6 hour work day is more productive than 8 hour work day

Who is involved?

Labour groups | Industry associations | Economists | Government officials | Industry or public partners

New knowledge

Impact: Implement 6 hour work day

KMB

Pilot study
Policy agencies
Media reviews
Awards
Recognitions

Drafting new Ministry of Labour guidelines

Implement new policy

Pathway to Impact

Consult with industry or sector; implement small scale trials

Short

Medium

Long

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Examples of KMB products

- Face-to-Face Meetings
- Reports
- Focus groups
- Models
- Procedures
- Website content/ blog
- Online tool
- Toolkit
- Policy brief
- Meeting
- Video
- Audio lecture
- Community work
- Advisory committee
- Networking event
- Tweets, blog
- Website

- Dinner
- Presentation
- Panel presentation
- Opinion piece
- Interview (tv, radio, written)
- Clear language summary of journal publication, book
- Open access publication
- Conference presentation, keynote
- Professional organization publication
- Testifying as an expert
- Lay presentation
- Webinar
- Student training
- Apps
- Etc.

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Conferences, Papers, Policy Briefs, White Papers

- <u>Conferences and peer-reviewed papers</u> – these are standard and expected for reaching academic audiences

  - Tri-agency requires all publications arising from funding be made open access within 12 months of publication

  - Open Data

- <u>Policy Briefs</u>: Writing reports or briefs outlining key findings and policy recommendations for policy-makers is an effective way to ensure your research gets into the hands of those who can make change

  - It is best to have specific contacts to whom these can be sent directly – it ensures the viability of the plan

  - There are also specific outlets designed to distribute policy briefs to policy-makers – *Policy Options* published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (there are many others targeted to specific areas and fields)

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Events and Media Outlets

- <u>Workshops and seminars</u>:

  - For example, a project that proposes to develop a "smart city" platform will host workshops in several subject cities – each will include government partners, civic actors, researchers, and industry. Participants will help to design and prototype solutions to agreed-upon problems etc…

- <u>Exhibits</u>:

  - For example, a project that examines the effects of gentrification will host a photo exhibition of images captured by human subjects in relation to their neighbourhoods. The audience will include researchers, municipal governments, businesses.

- <u>Public lectures</u>:

  - For example, a project that develops a male allies for gender equity on University campuses will deliver several public lectures on campus and in community centres in order to engage relevant audiences.

- <u>Media interviews</u>:

  - For example, a project that analyzes NAFTA and Brexit will conduct media interviews with relevant outlets (*Globe and Mail, Business Insider*) to ensure that findings reach a broad audience.

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Web-based and Social Media

- Webinars:

  - Effective way to bring together researchers, industry, government, non-profit orgs to disseminate results efficiently and effectively – great for visual results (ie digital content) and online debate

- Podcasts:

  - For example, a project examining changes to the Canadian mining industry will create 30-minute podcasts to run on an already existing podcast targeted to relevant audiences (with established readership)

- Websites:

  - Researchers can create their own, or use existing (word of caution)

- Blogs:

  - Researchers can create their own, or post on existing (word of caution)

- Social media:

  - Twitter, Instagram and others (words of caution)

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Toolkits

- Specialized toolkits created with the end user in mind

    - These can be very useful for direct and thoughtful engagement with target audiences

    - For example, the project mentioned earlier related to creating male allies on university campuses will create a toolkit to be distributed to Canadian Universities that will provide:

        - A summary of the data collected;

        - Guidelines for how to develop an allies program;

        - Best practices for recruiting members and effecting change.

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Further resources

- Ontario Centre of Excellence KMB toolkit - http://www.kmbtoolkit.ca/

- Research Impact - http://researchimpact.ca/

- SSHRC Guidelines for Effective Knowledge Mobilization - http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/knowledge_mobilisation-mobilisation_des_connaissances-eng.aspx

- CIHR Guide to Knowledge Translation - http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45321.html