Knowledge in Motion/08 Conference

The Harris Centre, Memorial University

Strategic Intelligence Summary Report

December 2008

Strategic Intelligence Group
The Art of Guessing Correctly

Contents

Executive Summary

Knowledge in Motion/08

For the purposes of the conference, knowledge mobilization encompasses all aspects of knowledge transfer, exchange dissemination and brokering. KMb emphasizes action and two-way communication between researchers and research users.

Two keynote speakers, five plenary sessions, 29 concurrent sessions and over 75 presentations added up to three very full days at the Knowledge in Motion/08 international conference in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, October 16th to 18th. During those days, over 200 conference delegates explored the many ways in which higher education institutions mobilize knowledge to affect regional development. Go to www.knowledgeinmotion.ca to see the conference program, videos and presentations.

Conference organizers made every effort to ensure the event lived up to its name. The Strategic Intelligence Group was invited to apply its Strategic Intelligence Process at the conference. The process helps turn information from a wide range of sources into individual and collective knowledge. For example, have you ever returned home from an excellent conference with only a vague sense of the actual take-away? The information most relevant to you finds a home; the rest, even good information, slips away.

The Strategic Intelligence Group process has been designed to provide Knowledge in Motion/08 participants with a shared take-away. The conference offered a wealth of information at keynote and plenary sessions. Using onsite polling of good questions, table discussion and a post-conference internet survey, the Strategic Intelligence Group "screened" the vast amount of information through the unique experience and expertise of conference participants.

"What motivates the growth of knowledge mobilization is the fact that it is vitally necessary and unstoppable. Simply put, society can no more afford to ignore research than researchers can afford to ignore society."
– Conference Participant

The screening allows us to capture, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the opinions and beliefs of Knowledge in Motion/08 delegates on key issues, as well as overall levels of agreement and understanding on these issues. This is the shared take-away, the knowledge generated by your attendance at the conference. This knowledge is being mobilized through the sharing of this summary report, prepared by the Strategic Intelligence Group.

Good Questions Highlights

Conference Leads to Increased Understanding of KMb ... although Participants Somewhat Uncertain on Role of Communities

◆ Onsite polling results show that a day of sessions clearly enhanced participants' understanding of knowledge mobilization (KMb). The largest increase is among those who had come to the conference with little or no understanding. By Day 2, 70% of participants had at least a moderate level of understanding of KMb – a 23 percent increase.

◆ The conference also improved participants' understanding of the role universities / colleges and communities play in KMb – although the level of understanding is not as strong for communities as it is for universities / colleges.

Universities/Colleges, Business and Government All Have Role in KMb

◆ Knowledge mobilization isn't just up to universities/colleges: 81% strongly agree that business and government also have KMb responsibilities.

Universities/Colleges Can Successfully Remove Barriers to Research

◆ Over three quarters of conference participants agree that universities/colleges can successfully remove the various cultural and structural barriers that prevent interdisciplinary and community-based research. Participants are more confident that barriers to community-based research can be removed than they are about barriers to interdisciplinary research.

Universities/Colleges Must be Responsive to Communities

◆ Virtually all participants agree that universities/colleges have a responsibility to be responsive to research questions coming from the community. Opinion on whether universities/colleges will take on this role, however, is divided: 44% are optimistic, 56% are pessimistic that such a transformation will take place.

KMb, Community-based Research Should Count in Career Development

◆ Most participants strongly agree that KMb and community-based research should be considered in academic career development decisions such as tenure, promotion and salary increases.

Strategic Intelligence Session Highlights

"In some cases, 80 years of learning have not been transferred."

- Conference Participant

As a means of encouraging KMb at the Knowledge in Motion/08 conference, organizers invited the Strategic Intelligence Group to facilitate a strategic intelligence session. The session engaged all participants in table discussions focussed on two questions: What are your top three learnings? How might you apply these learnings?

Top 3 Learnings

1. **Disconnect Between Universities/Colleges and Communities in KMb.** Many believe there is a disconnect or divide hindering knowledge mobilization between universities/colleges and communities. Academia is on one side of the divide, community groups, researchers, practitioners and sometimes government are on the other side.

   The disconnect between universities/colleges and communities is where KMb can break down, with lasting results: lack of relevance of research to communities, lack of accessibility to research and lack of application of research.

2. **The Importance of Collaboration & Dialogue.** A fundamental element of knowledge mobilization lies in communicating research to the wider world. The idea that there are opportunities to communicate academic research to non-academic organizations is an important learning for many conference participants.

"Media and academic and policy people are in the same line of work: professional explainers."

- Conference Participant

   Dialogue is critical to knowledge mobilization. Right now, many would say research is difficult to use – in part because it is not readily accessible, in part because there is so much research available, and in part because its benefits (i.e. relevance) are not well communicated. Building or enhancing relationships with the media is seen as key to knowledge mobilization.

3. **Need for Common Language:** In order to communicate effectively and enhance knowledge mobilization overall, many recognize the need for a common language. The general consensus is to make research understandable and meaningful at the community level – particularly for media being encouraged to share results.

Application of Learnings

◆ **Build Broad-based Networks:** Networking is an important tool, one that can be applied to bridge the disconnect, enhance collaboration and dialogue and build a common language. A recurrent theme is to ensure policy-makers are part of the communication loop; another is to consult with communities and maintain a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

◆ **Think Outside the Box:** Thinking outside the box is often used to describe the creation of new partnerships and learning from other groups and jurisdictions. Essentially, participants believe that widening the learning base across disciplines and communities will enhance KMb.

◆ **Develop a Common Language:** The development of a common language for communicating research to the wider community is seen as a foundation for effective KMb.

◆ **Create a National Association:** The final application of the learnings is, in effect, an outcome of all the others: the creation of a national KMb association to build broad-based networks, create relationships with media, think outside the box and develop a common language.

Post-Conference Survey Highlights

The post-conference survey enriches KMb by providing a quantitative overview of levels of agreement and understanding on key issues discussed at the Knowledge in Motion/08 conference, as well as deeper insights into participants' opinions. The online survey ran from November 15th to December 3rd, 2008. Fifty-seven of 198 conference participants contacted completed the survey, for a completion rate of 29 percent.

Overall Perceptions of Conference

◆ Overall perceptions of the Knowledge in Motion/08 conference are positive: 82% of post-conference survey respondents say it met their expectations, 89% say it was important for them to attend and 90% say their funders/work supervisors are supportive of attendance at such knowledge sharing conferences.

◆ The majority of respondents see "significant opportunities" for growth in KMb over the next 5 years. A number see growing recognition of the "value of knowledge" and increasing "cross-fertilization" among the sciences and social sciences as driving forces in KMb.

Expected Benefits of Attending Conference

◆ Two-thirds of those who conduct research expect their attendance at the conference to benefit their research and over three quarters of those who teach expect their attendance to benefit their teaching.

◆ A large majority (83%) of those who play a role in program development expect their attendance to benefit program development at their organization, and more

than half of those who play a role in policy development expect their attendance to benefit policy development.

◆ The onsite polling revealed that over half of conference participants were pessimistic that universities/colleges would transform to take on the role of KMb in the next five years. When asked what they thought was at the root of this pessimism, online respondents gave the slow pace of organizational change at universities/colleges as the main cause. Five years is simply not enough turnaround time to adopt new strategies.

◆ Bureaucracy and entrenched ways of doing things are also significant impediments to transformation. And knowledge mobilization will require a "paradigm shift" for researchers, as many are trained in a structure that doesn't allow or encourage two-way communication.

"… the speed of bureaucratic change is comparable to the rate of tectonic plate movement. Without highly motivated people in the administration, change may occur but will do so incrementally and slowly."

- Conference Participant

Testing Agreement on Conference Conclusions

In order to test strength of agreement on conclusions reached at the conference, the post-conference survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement on 14 statements. Results show a strong post-conference level of agreement on these issues.

◆ Close to three quarters (74%) of respondents strongly agree that greater awareness is required at the community level regarding the value of researchers, research and the research process.

◆ Overall, 82% agree there is new transformative energy going through Canadian campuses regarding knowledge exchange.

◆ Most (79%) strongly agree that funding applications for research grants should included a KMb plan for targeted segments.

◆ The large majority (84%) strongly agree that it is important for research to be relevant to communities.

◆ The clear majority (89%) strongly agree that it is important for research to be understandable to communities.

◆ Virtually all (90%) strongly agree that human contact and relationships are the core of effective knowledge sharing.

◆ Most (88%) strongly agree relationships between universities/colleges and communities are essential to KMb.

◆ There is strong consensus (90% agree) that current research is not clear enough to help government formulate effective policy.

◆ There is overall agreement (86%) that more citizen engagement is needed in order to develop effective policy options.

- Virtually all respondents (98%) agree that collaboration across research disciplines is essential for successful KMb.

- Six out of every 10 respondents strongly agrees that silo thinking, defined as lack of interdisciplinary cooperation, is the enemy of KMb.

"Communicate, communicate, communicate to enhance knowledge transfer."

- Conference Participant

- Almost all (90%) respondents agree that researchers will have to pay more attention to the role of the judiciary in policy decisions.

- The large majority (91%) of respondents agree that it is up to researchers – not the media – to translate what their research means to people in a manner that is relevant.

- Virtually all respondents (97%) agree that KMb is about putting knowledge in the hands of those who can use it.

Testing Agreement on a National KMb Association

- Response to whether there has been meaningful national consensus on the importance of outreach in the last few years is lukewarm, as about half of respondents somewhat agree this has happened.

- The majority (77%) of respondents agree it would be beneficial to have some type of national KMb association or network of centres of excellence that would generate awareness and regular conferences on knowledge sharing. More than three quarters also feel their community or government organization would benefit from being part of a larger KMb association.

- Opinion is divided on whether or not a national KMb association should be aggressively pursued: 42% think it should, 47% think such an association should be pursued cautiously or slowly.

- Most respondents feel that either *a*) universities/colleges or *b*) a consortium of universities/colleges, government, communities and industry should lead the charge in creating a national KMb association.

The Good Questions

Overview of Onsite Polling

Day 1 and 2 of the Knowledge in Motion/08 conference began with a brief session in which participants were asked to answer a series of "good questions". The questions were developed in advance and designed to gauge participants' understanding and agreement on key issues. Onsite polling technology provided by Memorial University instantly collected and displayed quantitative feedback. Four identical questions were asked at the start of both days. This gave conference participants a chance to see whether a day of presentations and discussions had resulted in any shifts in opinion. An additional series of questions on Day 2 further explored key issues and provided stimulus for ongoing discussion.

What constitutes a good question? On any given issue, ask yourself: if I knew the answer to this question, would it help me move forward?

Comparing Day 1 and Day 2

*Question   How would you describe your level of understanding of knowledge mobilization (KMb)?*
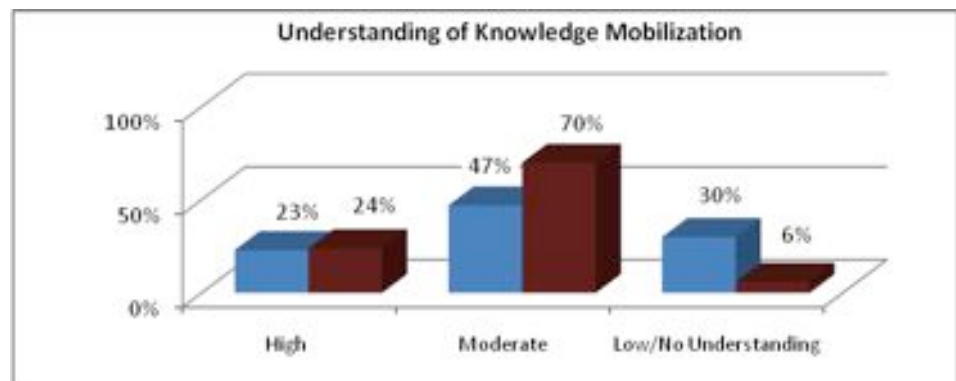
- A day of sessions clearly impacted participants' understanding of knowledge mobilization. Overall, those with a moderate to high understanding of KMb rose from 70% on Day 1 to 94% on Day 2.

- The improvement is due to an increase in participants moving from "low/no understanding" (down from 30% to 6%) to "moderate understanding" (up from 47% to 70%).

Question   *How relevant/important is knowledge mobilization to you in the role you play within your organization?*
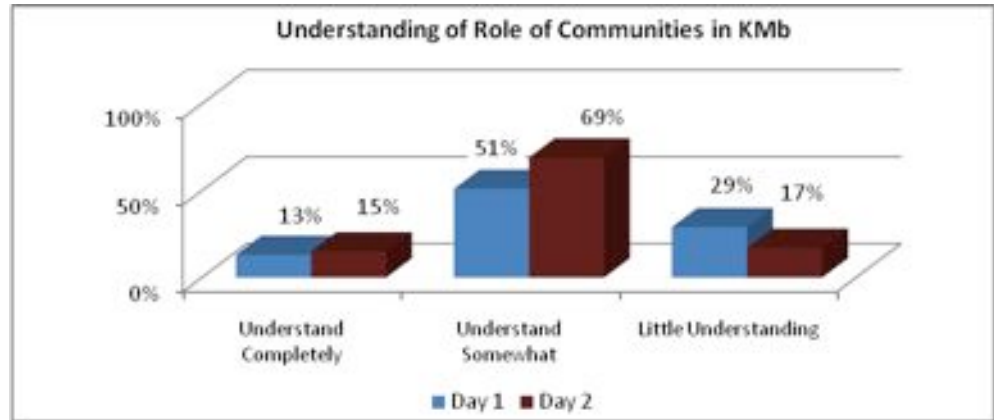

Importance of KMb in Your Role in Organization
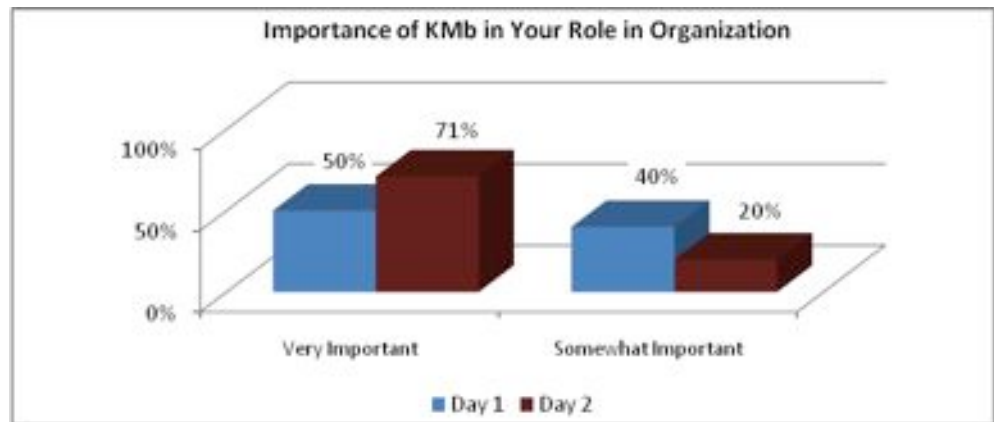
◆   Participants' strength of conviction regarding the importance of knowledge mobilization in their roles in their organizations increased significantly from Day 1 to Day 2 – those who deem KMb "very important" jumped from 50% to 71%.

Question   *How well do you understand the role of universities in knowledge mobilization?*

Understanding of Role of Universities in KMb
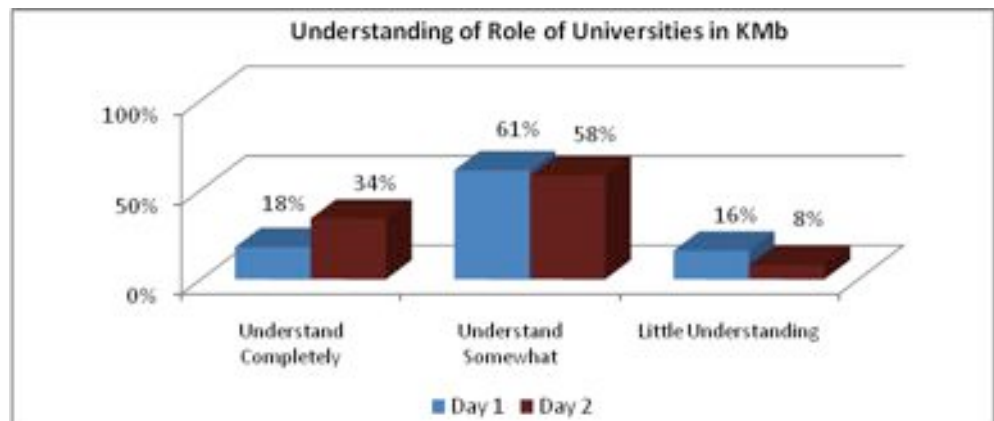
◆   A day of discussion and presentations improved understanding of the role of universities in knowledge mobilization. The percentage who "somewhat" understand is relatively consistent across both days, but the growth in number of participants who "completely" understand rose from 18% to 34%.
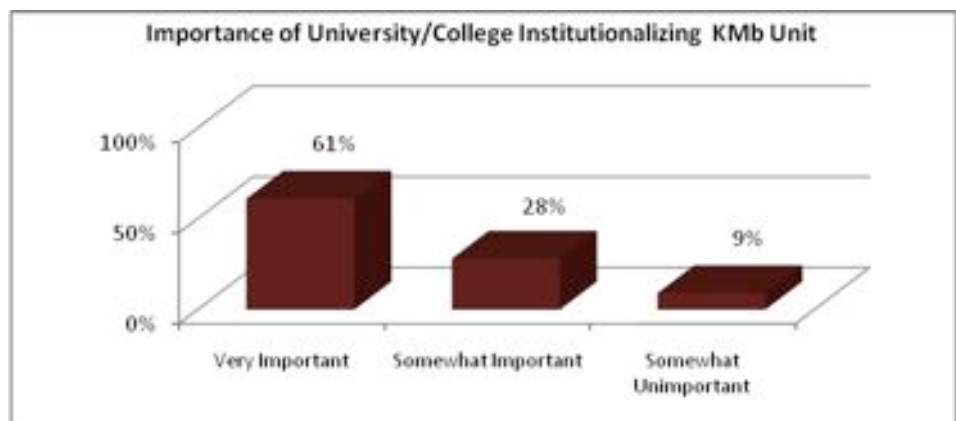
Question   How well do you understand the role of communities in knowledge mobilization?

Understanding of Role of Communities in KMb

100%

50%

0%

13%   15%   51%   69%   29%   17%

Understand Completely   Understand Somewhat   Little Understanding

■ Day 1   ■ Day 2

◆   Discussion and presentations improved participants' understanding of the role of communities in knowledge mobilization, which increased from 64% to 84%. The level of understanding, however, is not as strong as it is for universities. The significant increase is among participants who "somewhat" understand the role of communities in KMb, up from 51% to 69%.
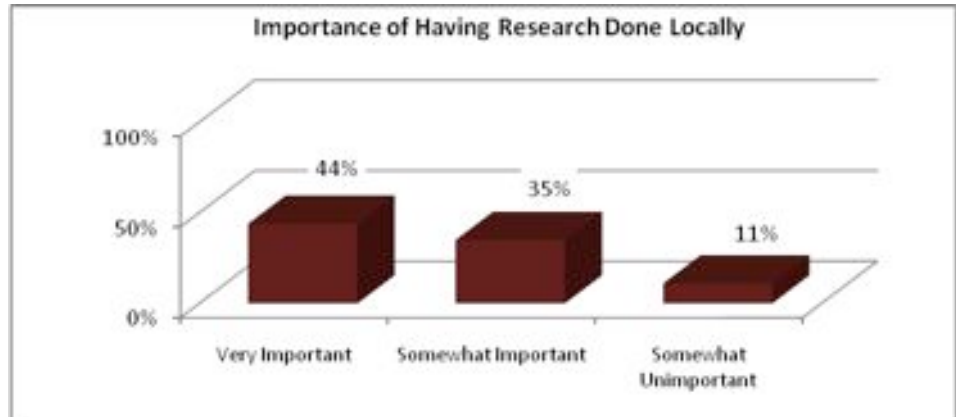
Day 2: Exploring Perceptions of KMb

Question   How important is it for universities/colleges to institutionalize a KMb unit?

Importance of University/College Institutionalizing KMb Unit

100%

50%

0%

61%   28%   9%

Very Important   Somewhat Important   Somewhat Unimportant

◆   Close to two thirds (61%) of participants believe it is "very important" for universities/colleges to institutionalize a KMb unit. Overall, 89% believe this is an important part of KMb.

Question   How important is it to you that research is done locally?

Importance of Having Research Done Locally

100%

44%

35%

50%

11%

0%

Very Important   Somewhat Important   Somewhat Unimportant

❖ Local research is an important factor in knowledge mobilization. More than three quarters (79%) believe it is important to have research done locally. Roughly four out of every ten participants deem this "very important."

Question   Do you agree that business and government have knowledge mobilization responsibilities?

Do Business and Government Have KMb Responsibilities?

81%

100%

50%

15%

4%

0%

Strongly Agree   Somewhat Agree   Disagree
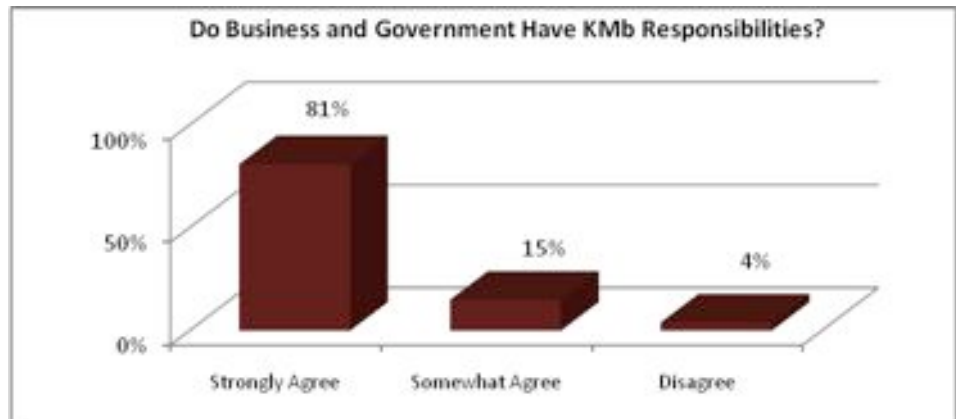
❖ Business and government are seen as vital participants to knowledge mobilization. Virtually all (96%) participants agree business and government have KMb responsibilities – with 81% saying they "strongly agree".

*Question   Where should knowledge brokers be located?*
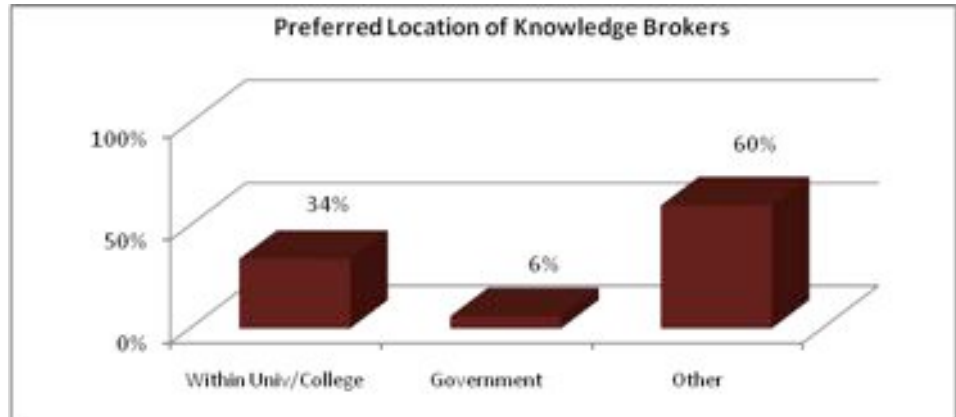
- ◆ Roughly one third (34%) of participants prefer to have knowledge brokers located at universities/colleges, while another 6% want them located in government.

- ◆ Note: in order to address the high percentage of "other" (60%), this question was asked again in the post-conference survey (*see page 33*) to give participants an opportunity to elaborate on "other" locations. In the online survey, other locations range from communities to "all of the above" (university, government and industry) to "every single sector of society" to "none of the above" (neutral location) to a national association.

Question   Do you agree that universities/colleges can remove the cultural and structural factors that prevent <u>interdisciplinary</u> research approaches?
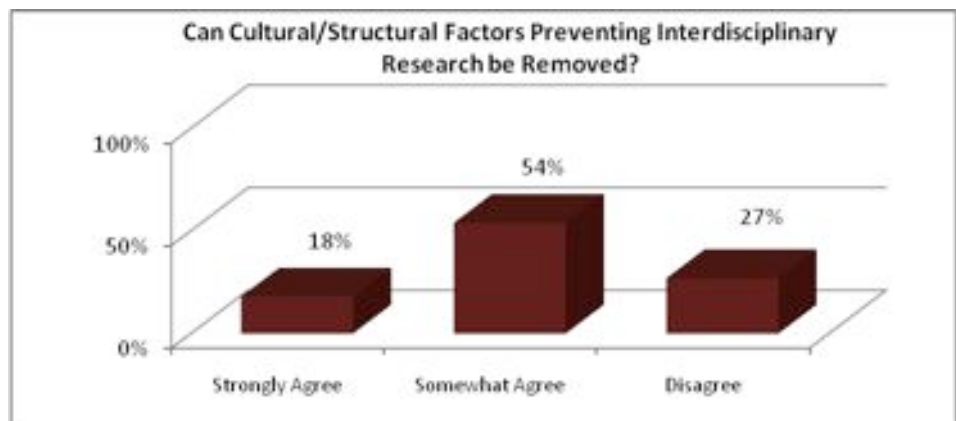

- ◆ Most participants (72%) agree that universities/colleges can remove the cultural and structural factors that prevent interdisciplinary research. Most (54%) "somewhat agree" with this statement, indicating a level of uncertainty.

Question   *Do you agree that universities/colleges can remove the cultural and structural factors that prevent <u>community-based</u> research approaches?*
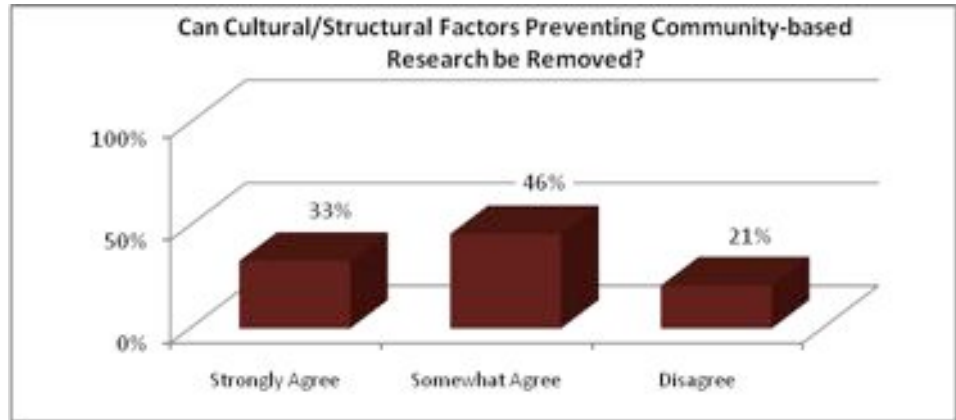

◆   Participants are more confident that universities/colleges can effectively address barriers surrounding community-based research: most (79%) agree, including one third (33%) who "strongly agree".

Question   *Do you agree that community-based research and KMb should count towards academic career development?*
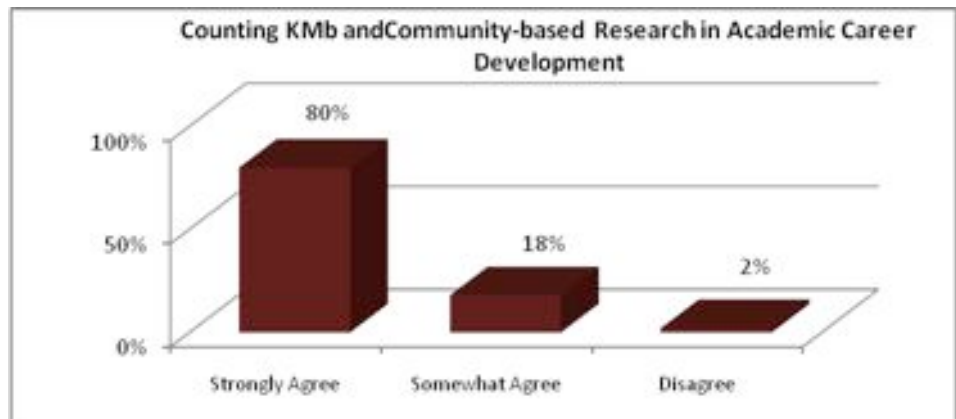

◆   Virtually all (98%) participants agree, including 80% who strongly agree, that KMb and community-based research should be considered in academic career development decisions such as tenure, promotion and salary increases.

Question   *Do you agree that universities/colleges have a responsibility to be responsive to research questions coming from communities?*

Responsibility to be Responsive to Questions from Communities

100%

68%

50%

27%

5%

0%

Strongly Agree   Somewhat Agree   Disagree
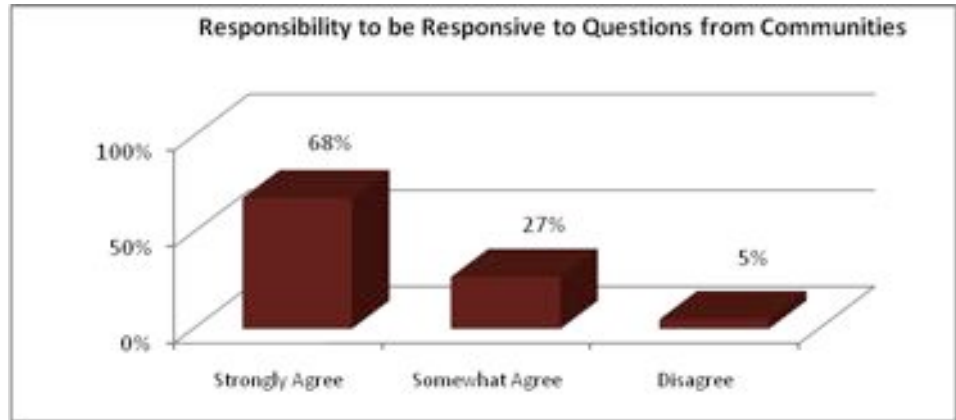
◆   Clearly, participants believe universities/colleges have a responsibility to be responsive to research questions coming from the community. Nearly all (95%) agree on this point, including 68% who "strongly agree".

Question   *Are you optimistic or pessimistic that universities/colleges will transform to take on this role in the next 5 years?*

Will Universities/Colleges Transform to Take on this Role?

100%

56%

44%

50%

0%

Optimistic   Pessimistic
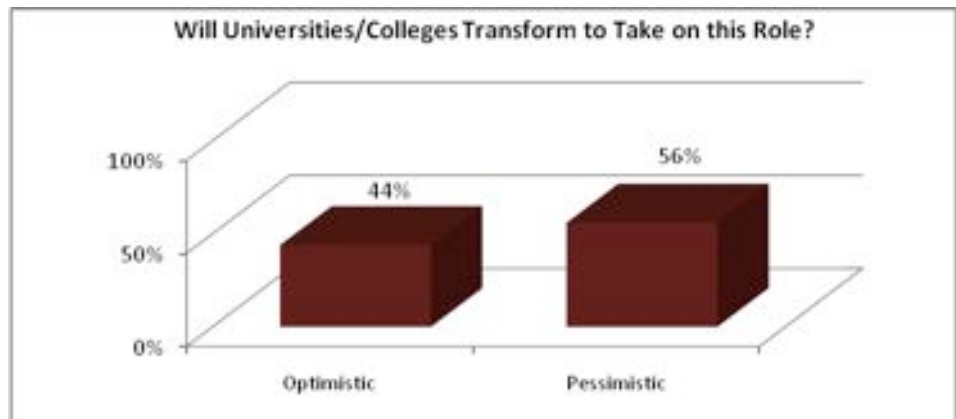
◆   Opinion is divided on whether or not universities/colleges will take on this role in the next five years. Approximately 44% are optimistic and 56% are pessimistic that such a transformation will take place.

Strategic Intelligence Session

Introduction

As a means of encouraging knowledge mobilization at Knowledge in Motion/08, organizers invited the Strategic Intelligence Group to facilitate a strategic intelligence session. Participants were engaged in table discussions that focussed on two questions: what are your top three learnings? How might you apply these learnings?

The intent of the strategic intelligence session was to screen the wealth of information being presented at the plenary and concurrent sessions through the diverse experience and expertise of participants, and to report back on overall learnings as they relate to KMb. This section summarizes the table discussions, based on completed participant handouts from each table.

Top 3 Learnings

Participants cite a number of learnings in their table discussions. Most relate to three key areas: the disconnect between universities/colleges and communities in KMb, the importance of collaboration and dialogue, and the need for a common language.

1. The Disconnect

A key theme arising from table discussions is the "disconnect" or "divide" between universities/colleges and communities. One table referred to this as "the difference between the net generation and not (older)". Another pointed to the "divide between community groups, researchers, practitioners versus academia/government. Oftentimes, the balance of respect and power is not equal." Another pointed out disconnects between different disciplines or areas, such as social wellness and economics.

> *"In some cases, 80 years of learning have not been transferred."*

The perceived disconnect is supported by onsite polling results that indicate some uncertainty on the role of universities and communities in KMb. Most participants generally understand the role of universities and communities in knowledge mobilization, but only a minority say they "completely understand".

Even the term "communities" is used in a broad sense. For some, communities means the world outside academia; to others, it can mean funders, advisory boards, government, business/industry and – significantly – media.

The disconnect between universities/colleges and communities is where knowledge mobilization can break down, with lasting results:
- lack of relevance of research to communities
- lack of accessibility to research
- lack of application of research.

"Research that is publicly funded ought to be publicly accessible."

The disconnect is also seen as a factor, and in some cases the cause, of the lack of influence of research on policy. "Research is NOT influencing policy to any great extent."

Suggestions for addressing the disconnect include having universities/colleges share physical space with government and other community-based research initiatives, making KMb an intention from the start and bringing in different perspectives of academia and community.

"Research matters. The challenge is to make research meaningful."

A number of participants raise the issue of research relevance. There is a sense that research is not generally seen as relevant by communities outside academia. This presents a significant challenge to knowledge mobilization. "Information needs to be relevant to be transferred." But, "what is the role of communities in influencing research topics?" and "do we need to communicate the social relevance of research?" These questions lead to the next key learning.

2. **The Importance of Collaboration & Dialogue**
A fundamental element of knowledge mobilization is communicating research to the wider world. The idea that there are opportunities to communicate academic research to non-academic organizations is an important learning for many participants. "The importance of collaboration and starting a dialogue between partners" is cited in many table discussions, as is the "importance of a multidisciplinary perspective," "importance of participation of stakeholders in framing questions," and "importance of dialogue that brings different groups with different perspectives together."

Most recognize that modern research is complex and that KMb of community-based research is going to make it even more so. Nonetheless, collaboration is vital not only

between universities/colleges and communities, but also between disciplines within universities/colleges. KMb requires a "good mechanism for exchange (e.g. conference) and ways to be involved – a model of inclusion between industry and post-secondary institutions."

"Tell stories to media; narrative captures attention."

Dialogue is critical to knowledge mobilization. Right now, many believe research is difficult to use – in part because it is not readily accessible, in part because there is so much knowledge available, and in part because its benefits (i.e. relevance) are not well communicated. Creating research syntheses is one way to make research more readily accessible. Another is to create "champions to connect dots and make meaning among disconnected parties and seemingly disconnected interests."

"Media and academic and policy people are in the same line of work: professional explainers."

A key to KMb lies in creating relationships with the media. A popular suggestion is for researchers and research organizations to build or enhance relationships with journalists. The importance of creating an ongoing dialogue with the media is raised in many table discussions. The need to tailor communication about research to lay readers (e.g. "eight-year-olds") is recognized as a factor in successful knowledge mobilization.

3. Need for Common Language
A common language is necessary in order to communicate effectively and enhance knowledge mobilization overall. A definition of "common language" is not put forward, but the general idea appears to be to make research understandable and meaningful at the community level – particularly for media being encouraged to share results.

There is a great deal of good research taking place in many disciplines; the question is how to translate the knowledge for different audiences? Table discussions suggest that a first step might be recognizing differences in language and semantics among different groups, followed by an effort to find common values.

Application of Learnings

Participants offer several suggestions for applying the three key learnings.

 ❖ **Build Broad-based Networks**

Networking is an important tool, one that can be applied to address the disconnect between universities/colleges and communities, to enhancing collaboration and dialogue and to building a common language.

> *"There is an empowering affect of participatory research."*

Some suggest establishing networks and relationships among like-minded organizations; others suggest reaching beyond the conventional. "Seek out people who have what you need." … "Make sure communities are part of the communication strategy." … "Continue to follow-up and sustain relationships through provision of support/ advice/ knowledge in partnerships and communities." … "Build trust relationships that enable flow (two-way) of information."

> *"Take a journalist to lunch."*

A recurrent theme is to ensure policy-makers are part of the communication loop. Another is to consult with communities at the outset and to bring learnings back to communities.

 ❖ **Think Outside the Box**

Thinking outside the box is often used to describe the creation of new partnerships and learning from other groups and jurisdictions. "Use a holistic approach. Try to come outside our silos and see how other groups can bring something to the table. Together, we can tackle the problem better."

Essentially, participants believe that widening the learning base across disciplines and communities will enhance knowledge mobilization. To do this, KMb needs to be part of the initial research plan.

 ❖ **Develop a Common Language**

The development of a common language when communicating research to the wider community is seen as providing the foundation for effective KMb. For some, this involves adapting models that speak to both industry and academia.

> *"Identifying the conflict or tension at the heart of the good news*
> *will become a practice in telling that story."*

The basis for creating a common language is understanding the audience. One table discussion put this into focus with a question: what is the "currency" of your audience? Understanding what their audience values can help researchers tailor communications to speak to that value.

Identifying common goals is part of building a common language. Other suggestions include:
- staging forums for discussions between communities, industry, businesses and researchers
- creating cooperative, interdisciplinary programming re: community-based research
- encouraging institutions to collaborate more and share knowledge
- consulting with community groups before starting research
- involving academics in workshops with community groups.

◆ **Create a National Association**
The final application of key learnings is an outcome of the sum of the others: the creation of a national KMb association. "Roundtables between academics, government and NGOS to feed off each other's work and research" … "Form organization of researchers to lobby for support to do community work and share best practices."

An official KMb association could lead the way in building broad-based networks, creating relationships with the media, thinking outside the box and creating a common language.

"Are we truly engaging practitioners/policy makers before doing the research?"

Post-Conference Survey
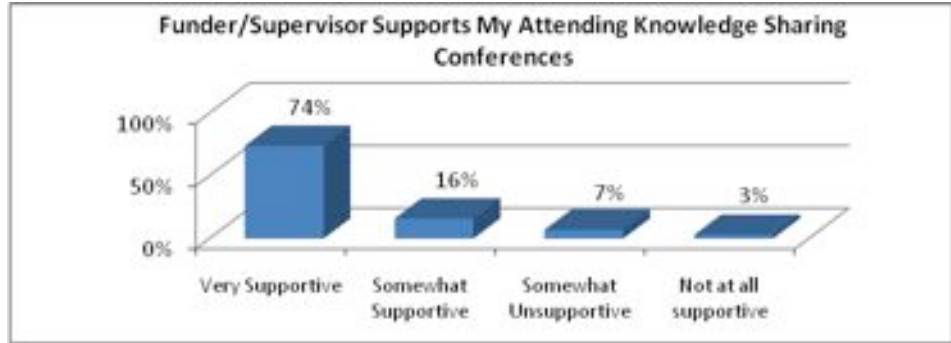
Testing Agreement & Understanding

The post-conference survey collected participant insights on issues discussed at the Knowledge in Motion/08 international conference October 16-18, 2008 in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The goal of the post-conference survey is to capture a quantitative summary of participants' levels of agreement and understanding regarding issues and outcomes presented and discussed at the Knowledge in Motion conference.

The Strategic Intelligence Group administered the online survey. All conference participants were provided an opportunity to participate in the survey through an email invitation sent out on November 15th, 2008. Follow-up reminders were also sent to participants. The survey ran until December 3rd, 2008. Fifty seven of 198 conference participants completed the survey for a completion rate of 29%. The results presented in this section have a confidence interval of 11% at the 95% confidence level.

Overall Perceptions of Conference

Question   Was it important for you to attend the Knowledge in Motion conference? Are funders/supervisors supportive of your attendance at such events?

Funder/Supervisor Supports My Attending Knowledge Sharing Conferences

A bar chart showing: Very Supportive 74%, Somewhat Supportive 16%, Somewhat Unsupportive 7%, Not at all supportive 3%.
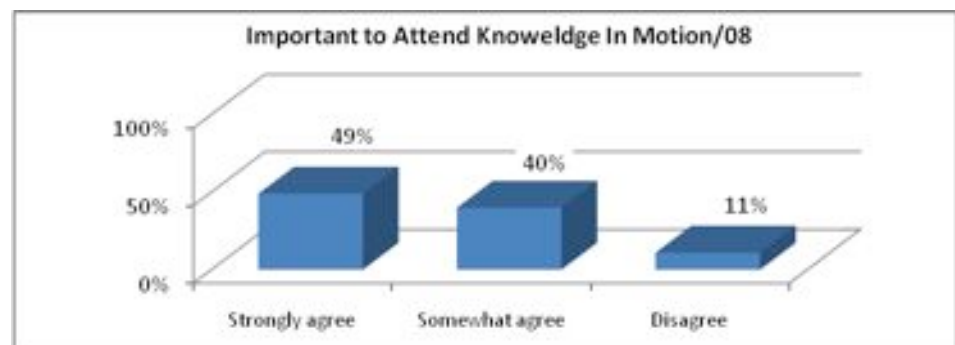
◆ Most (89%) post-conference survey respondents say it was important for them to attend Knowledge in Motion/08. Nine out of ten (90%) say their funders/work supervisors are supportive of their attendance at knowledge sharing conferences.

Question   Given what you experienced at the conference, which best describes how you see opportunities for growth in knowledge mobilization in the next 5 years?

Perceived Opportunities for KMb Growth in the Next 5 Years

A bar chart showing: Significant Growth 79%, Marginal Growth 18%, Limited Growth 3%.
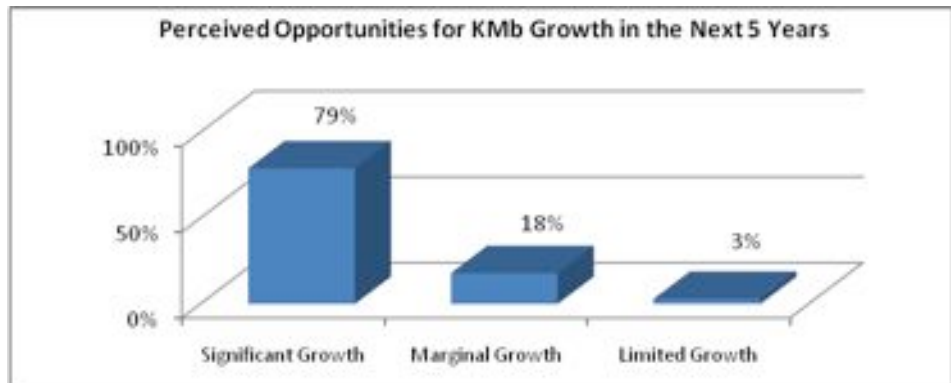
◆ Most (79%) respondents see "significant" opportunities for growth in KMb over the next 5 years.

Question   Why do you say that? What's motivating or impeding the growth of knowledge mobilization?

◆ A number of participants see growing recognition of the "value of knowledge" and increasing "cross-fertilization" between the sciences and social sciences as driving KMb growth. Even the current lack of KMb between universities and communities is seen as an opportunity: "There is all kinds of opportunity (and interest on the part of community leaders) to increase engaged research and knowledge mobilization."

"What motivates the growth of knowledge mobilization is the fact that it is vitally necessary and unstoppable. Simply put, society can no more afford to ignore research than researchers can afford to ignore society."

◆ Universities are facing increasing pressure to be more "relevant", which creates opportunities for KMb. Respondents also suggest that researchers are increasingly being asked to show how their research can be put to practical use, and that funders are growing more interested in seeing enhanced community engagement in research. There is also growing demand to capture the benefits of R&D investments, and growing awareness of the value of using knowledge strategically.

Question   How satisfied are you that the Knowledge in Motion conference met your expectations?

Satisfaction with Knowlege in Motion/08
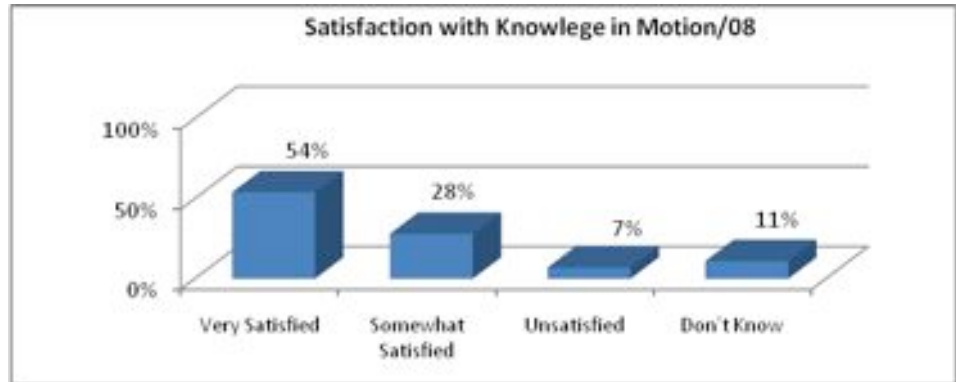
- Over half (54%) of respondents are "very satisfied" with the Knowledge in Motion conference; overall, 82% say the conference met their expectations. "Conferences such as Knowledge in Motion are catalysts for change in approach and an important source of information made readily accessible and understandable by a wide range of potential users."

Expected Benefits of Attending Conference

Question   Do you think your <u>research</u> will benefit as a result of your attending the Knowledge in Motion conference?

Expected Research Benefit of Attending Conference
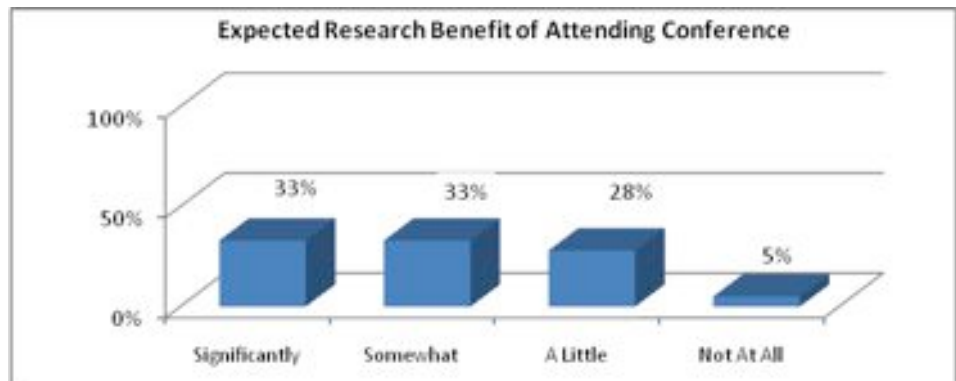
- This question pertained to approximately two-thirds of respondents. Of these, 66% expect their attendance at the conference to benefit their research, including 33% who expect it to "significantly" benefit their research.

Question   *Do you think your <u>teaching</u> will benefit as a result of your attending the Knowledge in Motion conference?*
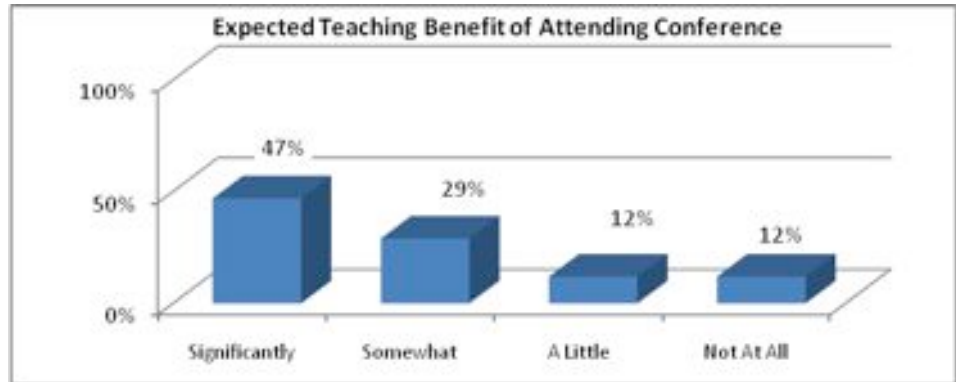
◆ This question pertained to 30% of respondents. Of these, 88% expect their attendance at Knowledge in Motion/08 to benefit their teaching – including 47% who expect a significant benefit.

Question   *Do you think <u>policy development</u> at your organization will benefit as a result of your attending the Knowledge in Motion conference?*
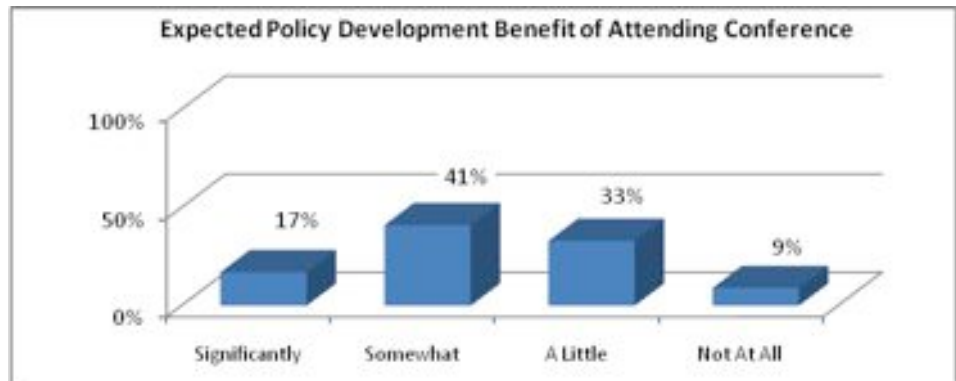
◆ This question was applicable to approximately 81% of respondents. Of these, the large majority (91%) expect their attendance at the conference to benefit policy development at their organization. Most (74%) expect to benefit "somewhat" or "a little".

Question   Do you think <u>program development</u> at your organization will benefit as a result of your attending the Knowledge in Motion conference?

Expected Program Development Benefit of Attending Conference
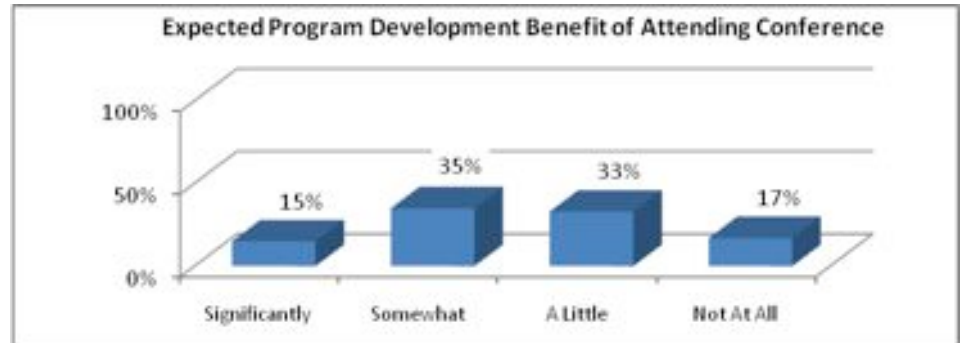
- This question was applicable to approximately 81% of respondents. Among them, the majority (83%) expect their attendance to benefit program development at their organization. Most (68%) expect to benefit "somewhat" or "a little".

Question   Onsite polling at the conference revealed that 56% of participants were pessimistic about universities/colleges transforming to take on the role of knowledge mobilization in the next five years. Why do you think participants answered this way?

- A key reason for pessimism regarding the transformation of universities/colleges is the slow pace of organizational change. "… the speed of bureaucratic change is comparable to the rate of tectonic plate movement. Without highly motivated people in the administration, change may occur but will do so incrementally…"

- Five years is not enough turnaround time for universities/colleges to adopt new strategies. "The timeframe is way too narrow; the nature of North American universities does not allow such a transformation to take place in just 5 years. There needs to be a transformation of values and norms within the academic environment before such a transformation can actually take place."

- Bureaucracy and entrenched ways of doing things are related impediments. KMb also requires a "paradigm shift" among researchers. "A great many are trained in a structure that doesn't allow for two-way communication, or allows only limited communication/participation on the part of the 'researched.'"

- Other reasons for pessimism include the perception that little is currently being done to transform; those able to drive change are busy with their own projects; tenure and other academic rewards are still closely tied to peer reviewed publications; and more emphasis is placed on commercialization than KMb.

# Testing Agreement on Conference Conclusions

In order to test post-conference strength of agreement, the online survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements discussed by participants at the conference.

Question   Do you agree greater awareness is required at the community level regarding the value of researchers, research and the research process?
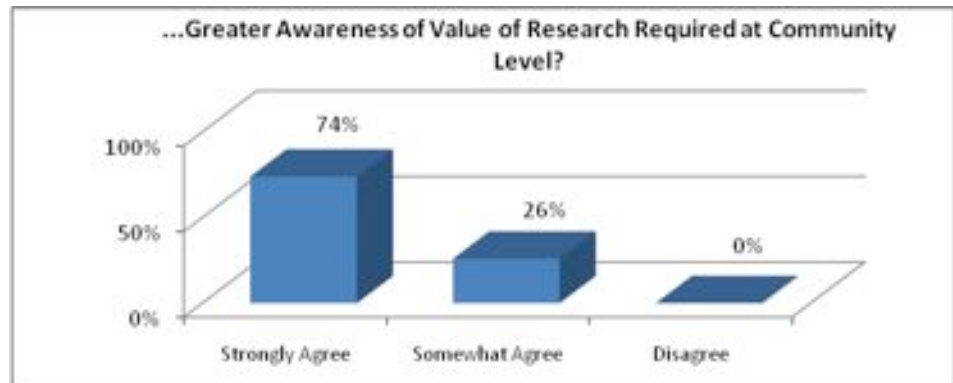

- ◆   All respondents believe there needs to be greater awareness of the value of research, researchers and the research process at the community level – including 74% who "strongly" agree.

Question   Do you agree there is a new transformative energy going through campuses in Canada regarding knowledge exchange?
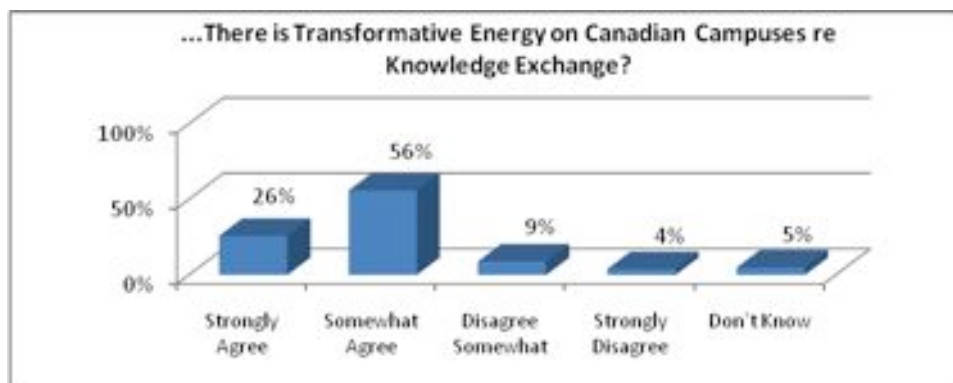
- ◆   Overall, 82% agree there is a new transformative energy going through Canadian campuses regarding knowledge exchange. More than half (56%) "somewhat" agree with this assessment compared to 26% who "strongly" agree.

*Question   Do you agree funding applications for research grants should include a
             knowledge mobilization plan for targeted segments?*
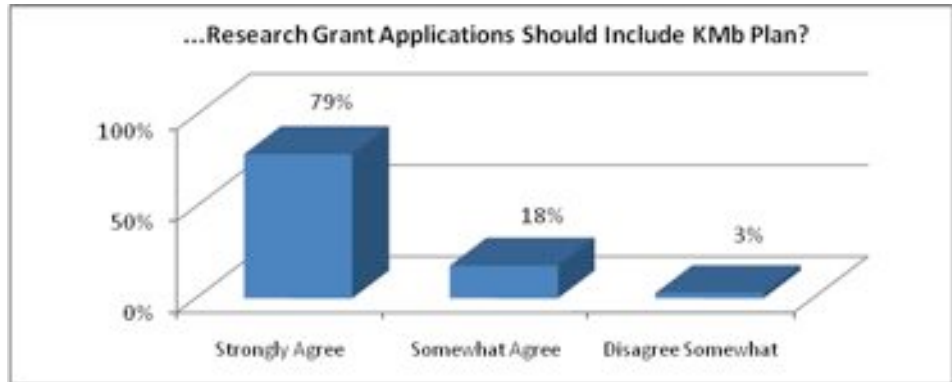

- ◆ Virtually all (97%) respondents agree that funding applications for research grants
  should include a KMb plan for targeted segments – and 79% "strongly" agree.

Question   Do you agree it is important for research to be relevant to communities?
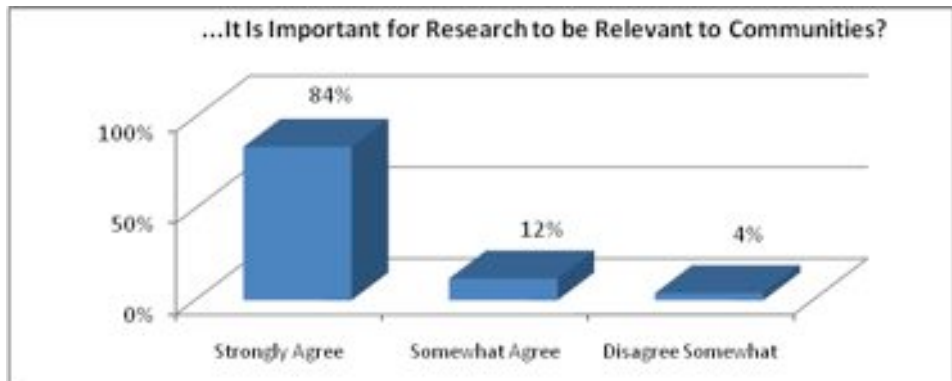
- ◆ Almost all (96%) respondents agree it is important for research to be relevant to
  communities, including the large majority (84%) who "strongly" agree.

*Question   Do you agree it is important for research, and the researchers doing it,
to be understandable to communities?*
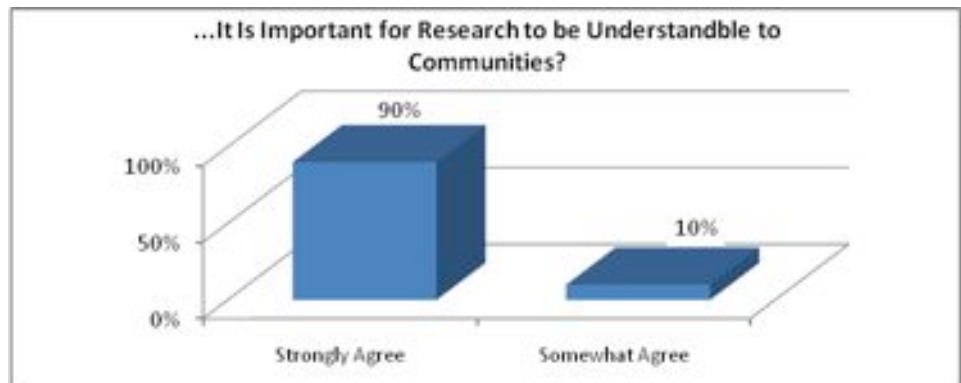
 ◆ All respondents agree, including 90% who "strongly" agree, that it is important for
research, and the researchers doing it, to be understandable to communities.

*Question   Do you agree the core of effective knowledge sharing is human contact
and the ability and willingness to have relationships with people?*

 ◆ Human contact and relationships are widely regarded as critical to knowledge
mobilization: 90% "strongly" agree these are the core of effective knowledge
sharing and 10% "somewhat" agree.

Question   Do you agree it is important to build stronger relationships between universities/colleges and communities?
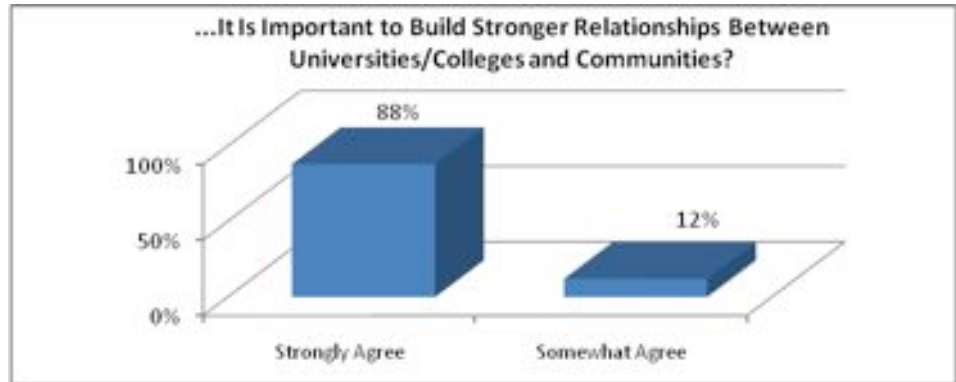

◆ Strong relationships between universities/colleges and communities are also essential to KMb: 88% "strongly" agree it is important to strengthen these relationships.

Question   Do you agree too much of the research currently being done is not clear enough to help government formulate effective policy?
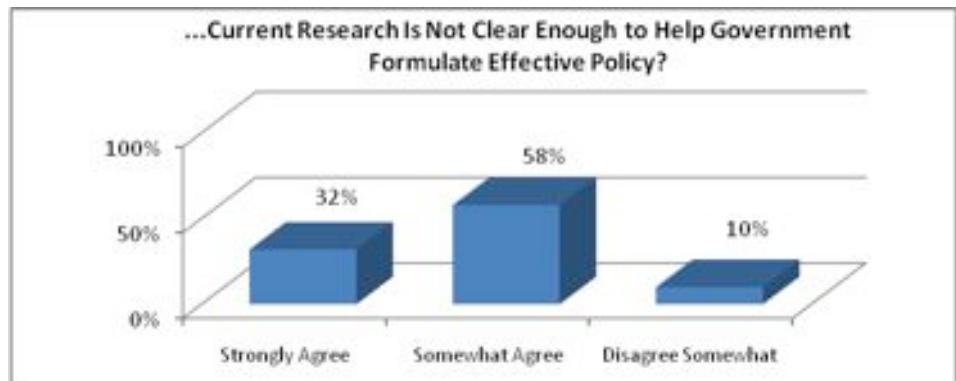

◆ The consensus among 90% of respondents is that too much current research is not clear enough to help governments formulate effective policy. The 32% who "strongly" agree compared to the 58% who "somewhat" agree suggests tentative agreement. For example, respondents may agree this is often but not always the case.

*Question   Do you agree there needs to be more citizen engagement to develop effective policy options?*
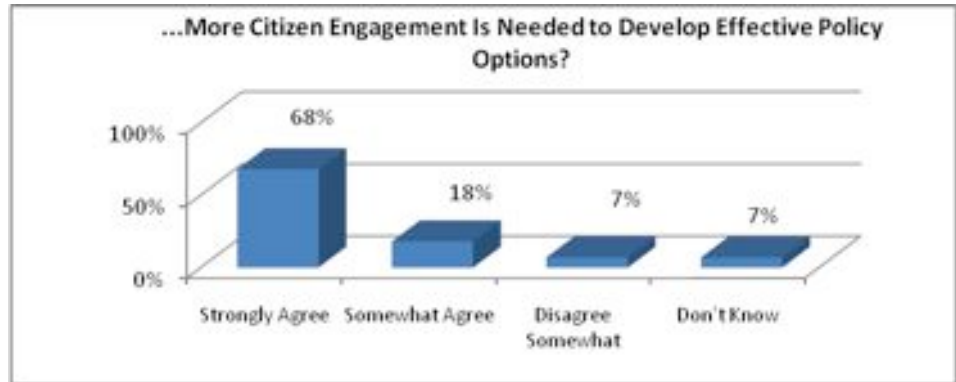
◆ There is overall agreement that more citizen engagement is needed, such as asking communities and the public what needs to be done, in order to develop effective policy options: 86% agree overall, including 68% who agree "strongly".

Question   Do you agree collaboration across research disciplines is essential for successful knowledge mobilization?
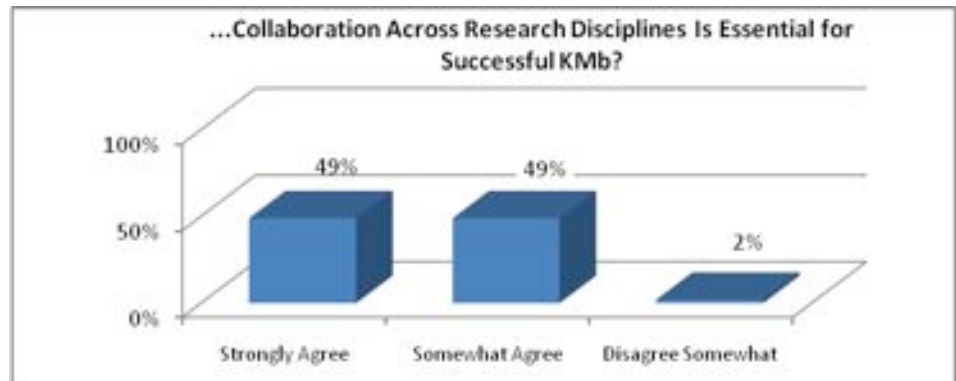

◆ Virtually all respondents (98%) agree that collaboration across research disciplines is essential for successful KMb, although they are divided as to whether they agree "strongly" (49%) or "somewhat" (49%).

*Question   Do you agree silo thinking is the enemy of knowledge mobilization?*
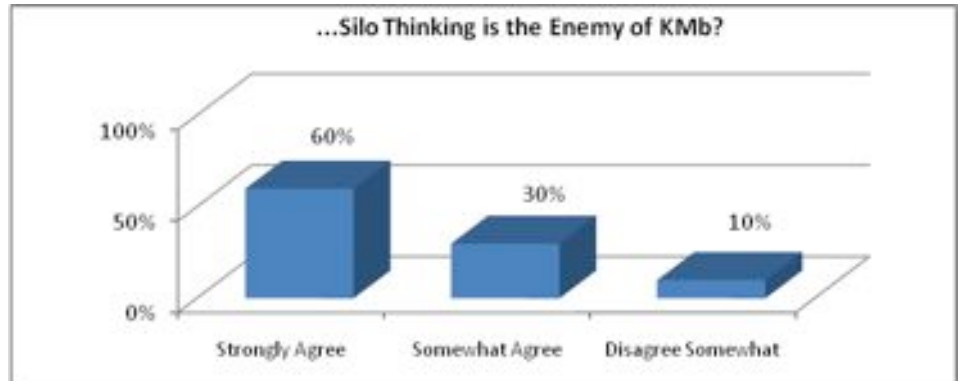
◆ Six out of 10 respondents "strongly" agree that silo thinking, defined as lack of interdisciplinary cooperation, is the enemy of KMb. Another 30% "somewhat" agree, meaning overall agreement with this statement is 90%.

Question   Do you agree researchers will need to pay more attention to the role of the judiciary in policy decisions?
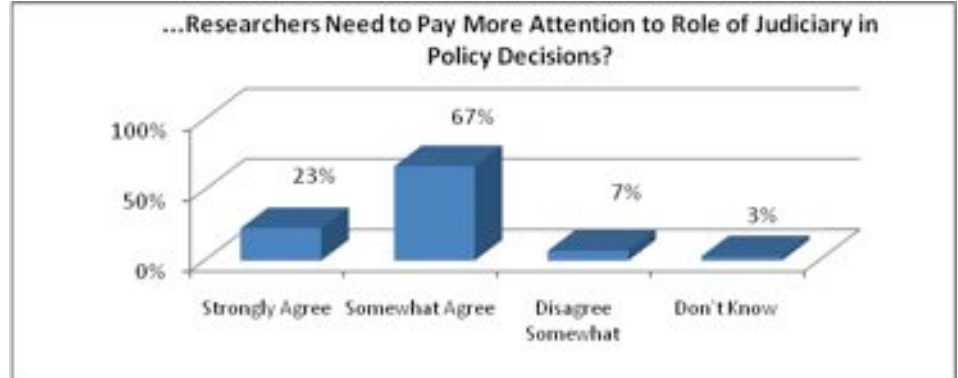

◆ Most (90%) respondents agree that researchers will have to pay more attention to the role of the judiciary in policy decisions, including 23% who "strongly" agree.

Question   Do you agree it is up to researchers, not the media, to translate what research means to people in a manner that is relevant?
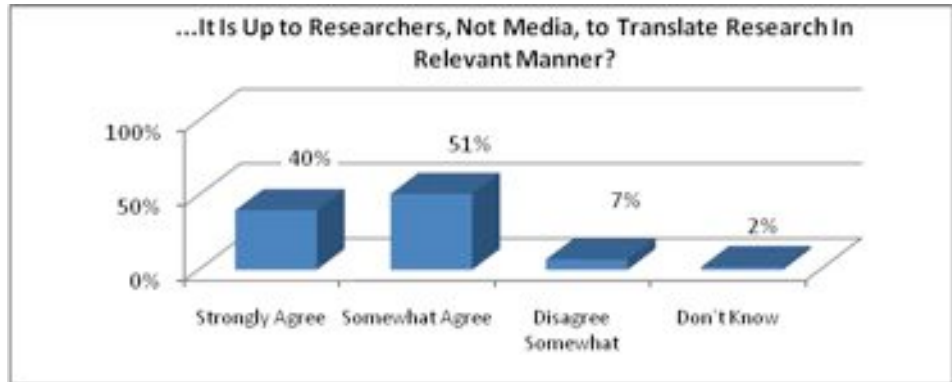
◆ The large majority (91%) of respondents agree it is up to researchers – not the media – to translate what their research means to people in a manner that is relevant.
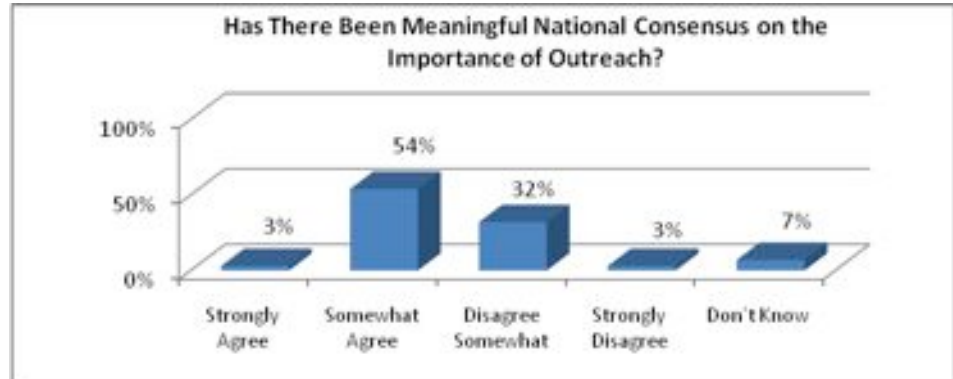
Question   Do you agree knowledge mobilization is about putting knowledge into the hands of those who can use it?
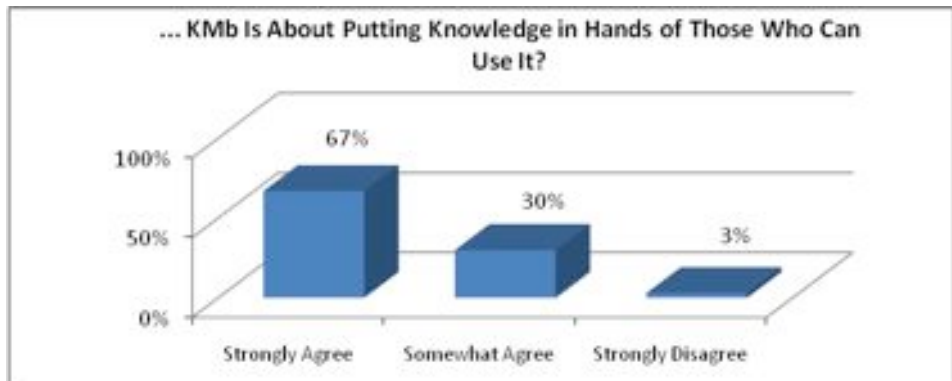
◆ Virtually all respondents (97%) agree that KMb is about putting knowledge in the hands of those who can use it. Just over two thirds "strongly" agree with this statement.

Testing Agreement on National KMb Association

Question *Do you think there has been, in the last several years, meaningful national consensus on the importance of outreach?*

Has There Been Meaningful National Consensus on the Importance of Outreach?

- Strongly Agree: 3%
- Somewhat Agree: 54%
- Disagree Somewhat: 32%
- Strongly Disagree: 3%
- Don't Know: 7%

◆ Overall, 57% of respondents agree there has been meaningful national consensus on the importance of outreach in the last few years, but with 54% saying they "somewhat agree", the strength of agreement is lukewarm.

Question *Do you think it would be beneficial for researchers to move ahead to develop some type of national KMb association or network of centres of excellence that would generate awareness and regular conferences on knowledge sharing ?*

Would a National KMb Association be Beneficial?

- Strongly Agree: 26%
- Somewhat Agree: 51%
- Disagree Somewhat: 12%
- Strongly Disagree: 11%
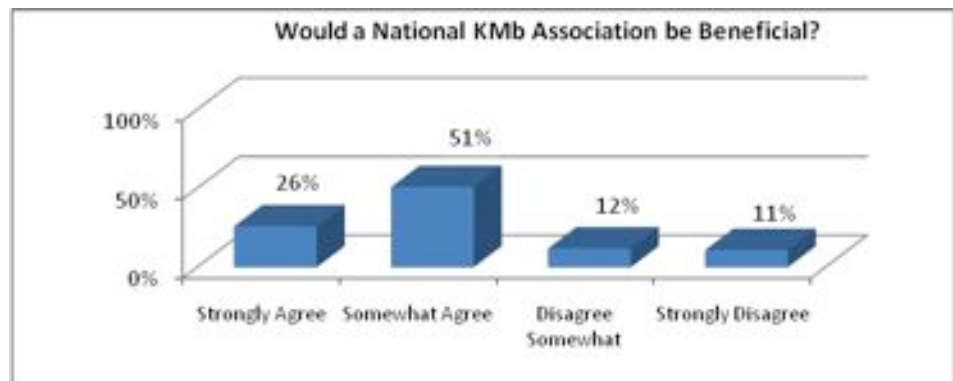
◆ The majority (77%) of respondents agree it would be beneficial to have some type of national KMb association or network of centres of excellence that would generate awareness and regular conferences on knowledge sharing.

Question *What about other non-university/college organizations; do you agree that your community or government organization would benefit from being part of some type of national or international KMb association?*
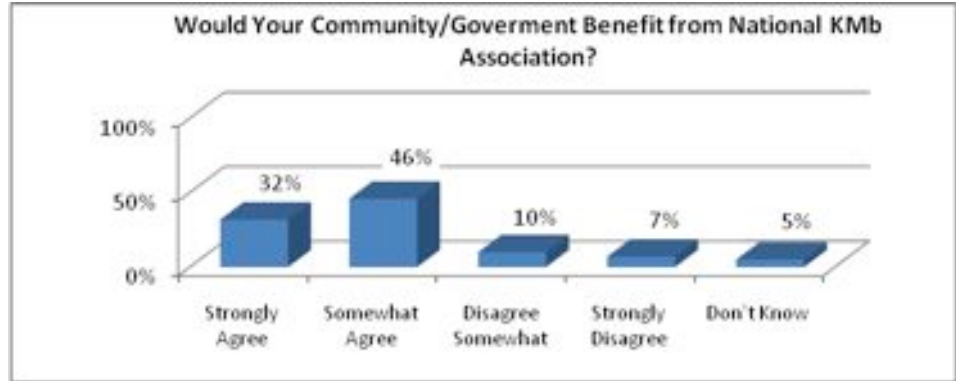

- More than three quarters (78%) of respondents feel that their community or government organization would benefit from being part of a larger KMb association.

*Question* *How aggressively do you feel such an association should be pursued?*
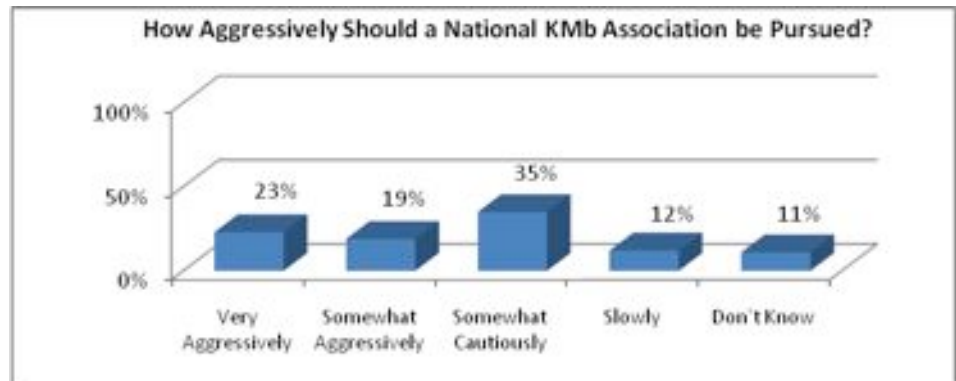
- Roughly 42% think a national KMb association should be aggressively pursued, including 23% who feel it should be "very aggressively" pursued. Another 47% think such as association should be pursued cautiously or slowly. One of the respondents suggesting caution identifies a possible reason for it by saying, "I'm not sure anyone has time for this … would detract from research and knowledge mobilization activities."

Question   Who do you think should lead the charge on pursuing the formation of such an association?
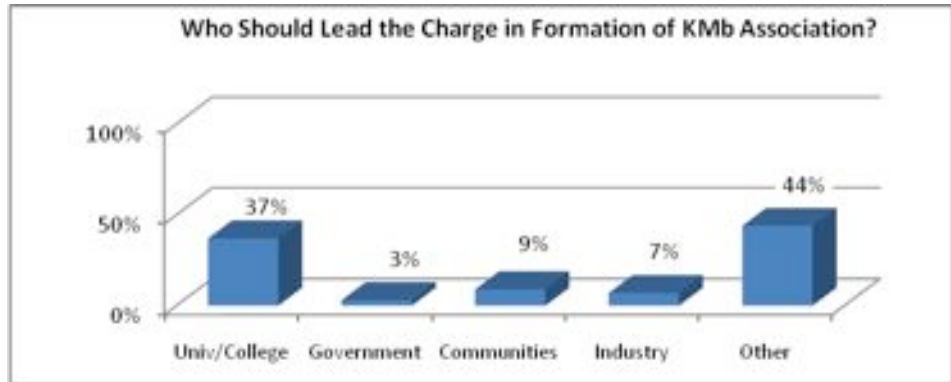
- More than a third (37%) of respondents think universities/colleges should lead the charge in forming a national KMb association.

- Among the 44% who chose "other", the main choice was for a consortium that included universities/ colleges, government, communities and other stakeholders. "Considering the whole point of knowledge mobilization, it really ought to be driven by an agglomeration of all of the above."

Question   Where do you think knowledge brokers should be located?
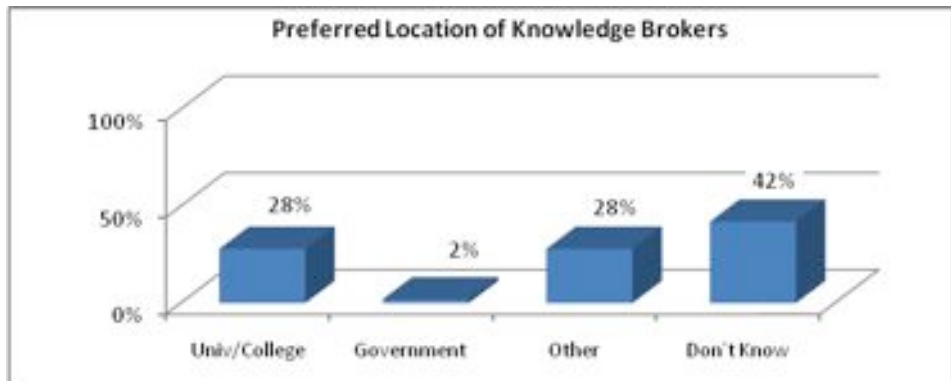
- While 28% of respondents think knowledge brokers should be located in universities/colleges, 28% suggest "other" locations and 42% say they don't know. Those who chose "other" offer a variety of suggestions, from communities to a national organization that could act as a clearing house for ideas, to neutral locations (i.e. none of the above), to "all of the above" (university, government and industry).

Thoughts on Youth Group

Question   Were you part of the advance group on Youth and Climate Change?
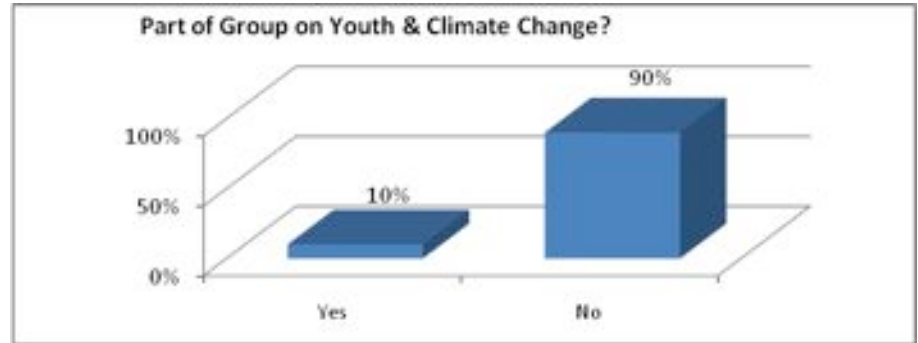
◆   Most respondents were not part of the pre-conference group on Youth and Climate Change, largely due to the fact that a large majority (70%) of them are older than 35 years.
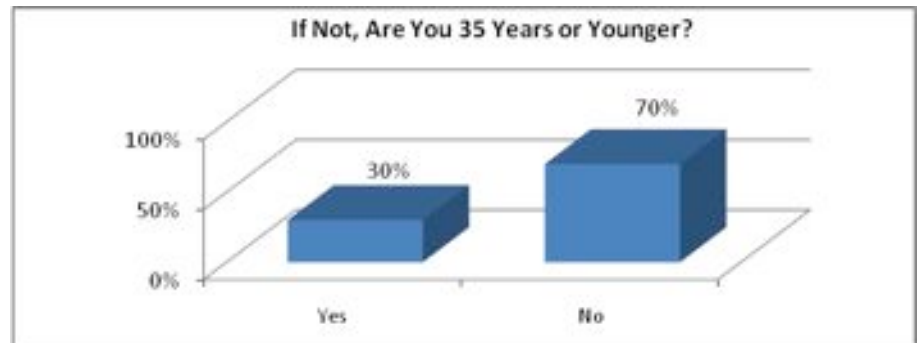

Question   The group on Youth and Climate Change shared lessons learned and "promising" practices with the plenary group. Is there anything unique about youth initiatives that other participants could learn from?

◆   *Absolutely. But what is the definition of "youth" used? By law it varies but certainly stops by 24 (even for university grants and work programs).*

◆   *… in general, youth initiatives are unique because they offer not only a fresh (read non-institutionalized) view of things – and young activists will be the leaders of tomorrow.*

◆   *If we don't get our younger people involved and their ideas respected knowledge mobilization will fall by the wayside.*

◆   *Their energy and their creative thinking. We need to start thinking outside of the box. This may seem like an old cliché but it is still relevant today.*

Other Thoughts & Comments

Question   How would you describe yourself?
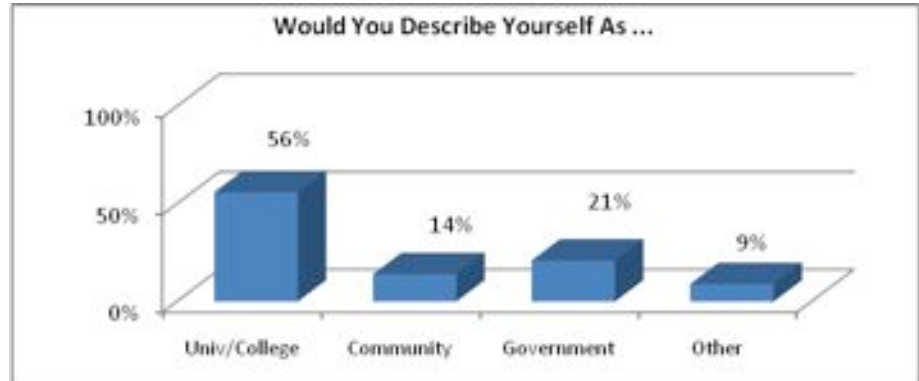
- More than half of respondents describe themselves as university/college, 21% as government and 14% as community.

Question   What is your role in knowledge mobilization?

Respondents provided a variety of insights into their roles in knowledge mobilization within their organizations. Responses include:

- *At the research level, to describe local regional knowledge dynamics. Follow up by input to policy on knowledge mobilization as a tool to enhance regional development.*

- *30 years of connecting with families participating in genetics research and with their health care providers, before, during and after the laboratory research; putting in place the changes in clinical management resulting from the knowledge gained in the research.*

- *As a researcher I see my role as understanding the community where I conducted my research and translating the diverse perspectives in terms of wishes for specific types of social change and perceptions of the means to effect such change.*

- *Collaborating, partnering and improving the sharing of particular areas of knowledge for the rural, sustainable, economic development movement.*

- *Currently working to help set up a centre whose central purpose will be knowledge mobilization.*

- *Regularly reflect upon the partners in my work and include them in deliberations, communications, and decision-making.*

- *To be able to help develop a better society.*

Question   After having attended the Knowledge in Motion conference, what have you learned that you can build on?

◆ *Communicate, communicate, communicate to enhance knowledge transfer.*

◆ *That there is a vast amount of useful information out there, information that can be utilized to provide evidence-based decision-making for all stakeholders on the best ways to move forward with activities, projects and community sustainability.*

◆ *I think that involvement and translation for the correct audience, be that public or policy community, is one of the key learnings.*

◆ *Policy makers need information that is well-grounded on research.*

◆ *Primarily a heightened awareness of the concept of knowledge mobilization and hence of a policy of regional knowledge strategy as a main thrust in regional development.*

◆ *... sadly, if I learned anything it was that universities are even more myopic than I feared from my attempts to excite interest in community alliances.*

◆ *The importance and difficulty of knowledge mobilization to the government.*

◆ *Young people learn using differing technologies and approaches and these must be tapped into for successful knowledge mobilization to occur.*

◆ *There is relevant research out there, the issue is getting it into the right hands.*

◆ *To be more aggressive to approach researchers/institutions about particular local problems/issues.*

◆ *We need to keep pushing the idea of partnerships in sharing knowledge. We need to educate the community so that they realize they have a part to play and that they need to demand to be able to participate.*

Question   Do you have any thoughts on how we should measure success?

◆ *Difficult to measure. For business it would be tied to financial return on investment. For the community it would be a better quality of life ... For the environment it would be sustainability.*

◆ *If we know how many people are now actively involved, we could compare these numbers to those of the next few years.*

◆ *Impacts in terms of adoption of progressive public policy; increased trust among partners; transparent communications; models for effective governance.*

◆ *In the satisfaction of people concerned with a project.*

◆ *Number of projects/programs implemented through a KM association, office, etc.*

◆ *Performance indicators and outcome measurement frameworks (RMAF).*

- *The degree to which public debates are initiated and informed by research, and by policy change.*

- *When using particular areas of knowledge, evaluation processes should be put in place. Pre and post evaluations could be used to measure over the immediate, intermediate and long term.*

Question   Are there any other closing comments you wish to add?

- *More opportunities such as the Knowledge in Motion conference should be made available to students as well as researchers. Universities should invest in their young/ future researchers, future government officials and future entrepreneurs by sponsoring (or financially assisting) their participation to conferences and seminars on KM. Thanks to Memorial University for doing just that.*

- *I wonder in terms of overcoming some of the criticisms from the floor whether instead of organizing panels of like constituents (university administrators, community groups, researchers, etc.) whether there could be more interaction across those groups. I would welcome smaller sessions which enabled debate around specific topics.*

- *I think this was the first time I, as a community person, was invited to such a conference*

- *The conference gave me a new concept with which to view my work. Coming from outside Canada to a conference dominated by Canadians gave me a unique sense of Canadian discourse on the topic today. Thank you for that.*