Innovation and Creativity in City Regions:
Do We Have What it Takes to Compete with Canada’s Urban Centre’s?

Rob Greenwood, Ph.D.
Presentation to Rotary
February 2009
Presentation Outline

• Harris Centre Mandate & Values
• Knowledge Mobilization in Action
• National Project: Innovation and Creativity in City Regions
• Preliminary Findings
• Next Steps
Harris Centre Mandate

• Established October 2004
• Coordinate and Facilitate the University’s Activities Relating to Regional Policy and Development
• Advise on Building the University’s Capacity
• Identify Priority Themes and Projects relating to:
  • Teaching
  • Research
  • Outreach
• Emerging role: Honest Broker
Harris Centre Values

The Harris Centre aspires to live up to the reputation of Leslie Harris, in whose honour the Centre is named:

• Integrity
• Independence
• Transparency
• Collaboration
• Practical Application
Harris Centre
Knowledge Mobilization Programs and Initiatives

• Public Presentations
• Invitation-only Sessions
• Targeted Research Funding
• Knowledge Exchange
• Packaging Research to Meet Needs
• Regional Workshops
• New Opportunity Identification: “one-pagers”
• On-line Inventory
  ➢ Live web-cast launch, 10 a.m., Feb. 11:
    www.mun.ca/harriscentre
Social dynamics of economic performance, innovation & creativity

- $2.5 M National Project led by Dr. David Wolfe, Munk Centre, University of Toronto
  - The Innovation Systems Research Network (ISRN)

- Social Dynamics of Economic Performance: Innovation and Creativity in City Regions
  - Success in new economy depends on ability of region to create conditions for innovation & creativity
  - Harnessing Universities, Colleges, R&D Capacity
  - Attracting and Retaining Knowledge Workers
  - Creating Governance Capacity for Success: More than Government
  - Networks / Collaboration / Trust amongst key actors – private, public, NGO, education & training, key to success
Social dynamics of economic performance, innovation & creativity

• St. John’s City Region one of 15 City Regions being studied across Canada

• Harris Centre extending research to Clarenville and Corner Brook regions and Lab West

• Interviews across three themes:
  • Social Dynamics of the Innovation Process
  • Social Foundations of Talent Attraction and Retention
  • Civic Engagement / Governance Capacity
St. John’s city-region: A metropolis on the margins? What about smaller “urban” centres in NL?!
St. John’s city-region: A metropolis on the margins?

- Continued relevance of staples economy
- Relevance of ‘creative class’ theory?
NL city-regions: Metropolis? Margins?

Importance of social networks

Loyalty to place, but perception of greater economic opportunities / creative ‘buzz’ elsewhere

Lack of perceived link(s) between St. John’s city-region and professional creativity

Social divides between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ (“CFA”)

Resource-based economy “requires” certain knowledge workers

City region size and role, relative to other places, matters
Mobilizing knowledge about the social dynamics of economic performance, innovation & creativity in city-regions

Partner Participation in Knowledge Mobilization Process

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<th>Prior</th>
<th>During</th>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement (data?)</td>
<td>Gaps (data?)</td>
<td>Results inform policy &amp; practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review, modify &amp; focus questions</td>
<td>Ground truthing / triangulation</td>
<td>Foster community interest / buy-in</td>
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<td>Aid selection of interviewees</td>
<td>Discussion of preliminary findings</td>
<td>Create new collaborations</td>
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<td>Buy-in</td>
<td>Review of write-ups</td>
<td>Enhancing university outreach</td>
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<td>Maximize benefits</td>
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Thank You!

- Comments?
- Questions?
- Suggestions?