

RESEARCH | RÉSEAU **IMPACT**
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CANADA | CANADA

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



This year has been filled with exciting work from the Network, despite a global pandemic. With the addition of four new members, a record for Research Impact Canada (RIC), we are now 21 institutions committed to a rich community of practice in showcasing the social impact of research.

We completed the hiring of four full-time staff to support RIC, funded by The Conference Board of Canada through the Future Skills Centre. We experienced incredible ripple effects with this increased capacity -- members focused more on strategic priorities for the Network, engaged in thoughtful conversations in the knowledge mobilization landscape, and connected more effectively with fellow members.

The COVID-19 pandemic might have underscored the need for effective knowledge mobilization but at RIC it hasn't limited our operations, nor has it defined what we do. Getting the results of research into the hands of community, industry and government has never been more urgent.

Excitingly, knowledge mobilization (and related concepts) is now a feature of most Canadian research funding competitions in all disciplines. Indeed, the New Frontiers in Research Fund is designed specifically to use research to address a well-defined need, challenge, or problem. Knowledge mobilization helps to maximize the impacts of research and at RIC we are here to help build institutional capacity to support knowledge mobilization.

We will continue to build on our successes in 2021, pandemic notwithstanding.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Phipps'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David J. Phipps, PhD., MBA

Assistant VP Research Strategy & Impact, York University;
and, Network Director, Research Impact Canada

2020 - A YEAR OF KNOWLEDGE BROKERING REMOTELY

In 2020, the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic resulted in immense and wide-ranging impacts on the activities and operations of institutions around the world.

At Research Impact Canada, the effects of university shutdowns were felt throughout the network, with the cancellation of research activities and academic conferences and the shift to working remotely.

As a pan-Canadian network, RIC members were already familiar with working together without being in the same physical space. We were well-positioned to continue doing our knowledge brokering remotely and connecting online.

Despite evolving challenges as the pandemic unfolded, RIC member institutions responded with resilience and innovative solutions to continue their work and support others. We shared resources to adapt to changing circumstances, pivoted to online events, and used committees as opportunities to touch base. Members found the Network as a source of honest and vulnerable support.

In this report, we are pleased to share with you the incredible work our network has accomplished over the last year.

HIGHLIGHTS



We **welcomed four new members** to our network, now bringing our network to 21 universities across Canada



Co-hosted the Canadian Knowledge Mobilization Forum in a new virtual format (and broke attendance records!)



Launched an **online repository of peer-reviewed knowledge mobilization tools**



Developing a **skills-based knowledge mobilization course**



With increased capacity, network members have pursued **ambitious strategic initiatives** for RIC

WHO ARE WE?



- BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY
- CARLETON UNIVERSITY
- DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
- KWANTLEN POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
- MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
- MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY
- SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
- UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
- UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON, UK
- UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
- UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
- UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
- UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL
- UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
- UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
- UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL
- UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
- UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
- UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
- UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG
- YORK UNIVERSITY

We are a pan-Canadian network of **21 universities** with a goal of maximizing the **impact** of academic research for the public good



21
Institutions
and counting



60+
People dedicated
to Research Impact



14
Years of turning
research into action

WHAT DO WE DO?



Build institutional support to encourage collaboration to connect research, policies, and innovations

Help researchers and partners to **demonstrate the impact of their research** excellence



Facilitate a **community of practice** by developing and sharing best practices, services, and tools

CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS



Knowledge Mobilization Toolkit

We created a peer-reviewed online repository of knowledge mobilization tools in collaboration with Advancing Research Impact in Society (ARIS). As a freely accessible “one-stop shop”, practitioners, researchers, event planners and others can easily introduce tools related to project planning, communications, writing, and evaluation into their practice.

[VIEW THE TOOLKIT](#)



Canadian Knowledge Mobilization Forum

We co-organized the Canadian Knowledge Mobilization Forum on November 24-26 in partnership with the Institute for Knowledge Mobilization. The Forum reached knowledge mobilization practitioners, students, researchers and those working in knowledge mobilization, across multiple sectors and industries. The Forum was a resounding success and brought a record number of 300 attendees together online to network and share best practices.

Research Impact Canada has always been a strong supporter for the Forum, and we're delighted to organize it for future years. The next Forum is scheduled for 2022 in Vancouver, British Columbia.



Skills for Knowledge Mobilization Course

We are creating a series of online modules, each focused on a specific knowledge mobilization skill, and freely accessible online. In the future, we plan to deliver in-person training when and where possible. This year, we plan to release modules on **Infographic Design** and **Accessible and Inclusive Event Planning**.



Future Skills Projects

We funded knowledge mobilization projects at RIC institutions to support knowledge mobilization of skills and training research and programming. These projects – backed by a total investment of approximately \$292 000 – effectively engaged with RIC's national and bilingual network and leveraged the Network's diverse expertise.

Impact in our first year:

- These projects delivered ten workshops and consultations across Canada, reaching an estimated 200 Canadians working in social research, skills training, academia, and non-profit sectors.
- These projects also funded eight work-study placements in local organizations working with underserved communities. These placements developed plain-language report briefs, infographics, and knowledge mobilization training curriculum and tools – all of which were produced bilingually.

Check out some of our outputs!

Knowledge Mobilization Needs Assessment Planner

– in partnership with University of Ottawa

Fostering Research Collaborations Training Toolkit

– in partnership with University of British Columbia

Moving Social Innovation Research into Real World Impact

– in partnership with University of New Brunswick

Lessons learned on conducting a knowledge mobilization needs assessment webinar

– in partnership with University of Alberta, University of Calgary, and University of Ottawa

Knowledge Mobilized Event

– in partnership with University of Alberta

Future Proofing Research Skills

– in partnership with McMaster University

RIC COMMITTEES

Research Impact Canada's activities and strategy is thanks to the engaged volunteer committees. This year, with the onboarding of full-time RIC staff, the committees continue to grow moving forward, revising their mandate, and deciding on strategic priorities.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee (Coco) has evolved significantly over the past year, thanks to the unprecedented growth the Network has experienced. To facilitate the inclusion of new members, the Communications Committee spearheaded the development of a Welcome Kit. After reflection by its members, the Coco decided to divide its mandate into two types of action. First, it will play an advisory role on the Network's communication tools (e.g., annual report, website, branding) developed by the Network team. Second, the committee will act more as a community of practice to share best practices and contribute to the development of content on topics considered priorities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Professional Development Committee supports professional development for brokers within the network. We continued with our monthly Dr RIC calls, member-facilitated sessions for brokers to ask questions related to their practice or more broadly around knowledge mobilization. The committee organized three webinars on the impact of research, social media for researchers, and Guelph's Research Shop model. Smaller working groups have been assembled to examine KMb scholarship, webinars, and a RIC award.

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Evaluation Committee guided the expert evaluation supports provided by Stephen MacGregor (PhD student at Queen's University). The Phase I Evaluation report focused on "usefulness" of RIC activities and included insights into how RIC might serve the needs of all members – not only those who closely identified as a knowledge broker. The next phase of evaluation focuses on how those useful activities were employed in practice.

[Read the report from the Phase I Evaluation!](#)

BILINGUALISM COMMITTEE

The newly formed Bilingualism Committee will define the guiding principles of bilingualism for RIC, provide actionable ways to promote continued use of French and English, and most importantly, respect members' diverse realities and French comfort levels in the Network.

GROWING THE RIC NETWORK

This past year, we welcomed four new institutions to our Network, now growing to 21 universities!



University
of Regina

The University of Regina

We were pleased to welcome University of Regina to RIC in March 2020 and work with Regina's Community Research Unit, a group of community-engaged scholars to connect research with community needs, and the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment.



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

The University of Calgary

The University of Calgary established a central Knowledge Engagement team in the fall of 2019, and we're thrilled to work with this unit and share learnings around measuring and evaluating impact and developing an innovation ecosystem.



UNIVERSITÉ
BISHOP'S
UNIVERSITY

Bishop's University

Bishop's University has identified increasing KMB capacity as a key mandate in their strategic plan. Excitingly, Bishop's University has already successfully implemented a Graduate Certificate in Knowledge Mobilization and developing a MSc in research and knowledge mobilization across Psychology, Biology, and Sports Studies (with interest from other departments as well).



SIMON FRASER
UNIVERSITY

Simon Fraser University

Simon Fraser University recently launched their Knowledge Mobilization Hub, which promotes, supports and advances knowledge mobilization across the university. The hub provides navigation support and guidance to researchers, builds capacity of KMB activities, and recognizes SFU knowledge mobilizers through their Story Series.

THE FUTURE SKILLS TEAM



Left to right: Julia Levin, Sylvia Urbanik, Helen Ng, Connie Tang

The Future Skills Centre is a national initiative funded by the federal government dedicated to helping Canadians gain the skills they need to thrive in the changing workforce. RIC was invited by The Conference Board of Canada to partner on knowledge mobilization work for the Future Skills Centre. RIC will leverage the strengths and expertise of the network to share learnings on effective skills development and build knowledge mobilization capacity for stakeholders, through academic institutions and beyond. Beginning in October 2019, Research Impact Canada began hiring full-time staff.

Connie Tang – Manager, Research Impact Canada
Julia Levin – Knowledge Mobilization Specialist
Helen Ng – Knowledge Mobilization Specialist
Sylvia Urbanik – Knowledge Mobilization Coordinator

Student Placements

Satpreet Dhillon (Master of Education student, Queen's University) completed an alternative practicum internship with Research Impact Canada. During her time with RIC, Satpreet developed and practiced her skills in knowledge mobilization through various tasks, including the development of multimedia infographic content.

In September 2020, we welcomed Madeleine Smith, Li Gu, and Jeea Park for community placements with Research Impact Canada until April 2021. Students are from York University's Faculty of Education and are supporting the knowledge mobilization course development.

RESEARCH IMPACT

This year, the Network built on the momentum of increased capacity and strategically engaged in exciting initiatives for knowledge mobilization on a national level.

Futures of Knowledge Mobilization Paper

Requested by SSHRC, members of the RIC Network were engaged in this report outlining how research institutions will play a critical role in the future of knowledge mobilization and research impact. Research institutions are the link between what governments and funders want and what researchers and their partners can deliver. Read the report [here!](#)

RIC Canada Engaged Scholarship Award for Graduate Students

In 2021, RIC launched an award for graduate students to recognize those that follow [engaged scholarship principles](#) to increased audience awareness. This award contributes to the promotion and recognition of engaged scholarship, co-creation of knowledge, or knowledge translation among Canadian graduate students.

Partnerships for Impact

Advancing Research Impact in Society (ARIS)

ARIS, housed at the University of Missouri, works with scientists and engagement practitioners to build capacity, advance scholarship, grow partnerships, and provide resources to help them engage with and demonstrate the impact of research in their communities and society. With our partnership, we have collaborated on developing a knowledge mobilization toolkit and we will also host a joint virtual Impact Summit in the Spring of 2021.

International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS)

The International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) brings together research management societies and associations from across the globe. Its purpose is to enable interactions, share good practice, and coordinate activities between the member societies, to the benefit of their individual membership. ARIS and RIC collaborated on the tool kit under the auspices of INORMS as part of the [Research Impact and Stakeholder Engagement Working Group](#).

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT US

"Involvement with RIC has been very helpful because it's helped us to bring it together in terms of what different universities are doing within Canada. We also have had some outreach into other countries."

- Terry Campbell, University of Ottawa

"There is more Knowledge Mobilization activity at the University of Winnipeg, which is directly related to our membership in Research Impact Canada. It makes me better at my job when I can get out and share what I have learned with people here on campus."

- Jill Condra, University of Winnipeg

"RIC has been great for finding different pathways for all of us across campus to work together, and we've also recently, in the last year, pioneered some shared training opportunities on campus."

- Elizabeth Shantz, University of Guelph

"As the first UK institution to join Research Impact Canada, the University of Brighton highly values the opportunity to share best practice on putting research insights to work for the benefit of local and global communities. This important strategic alliance enables us to scale up international collaborations and play our part in an influential network that advises policymakers, community practitioners, industry and government. Often developed with partners, our research tackles society's most pressing challenges and generates practical solutions to improve lives and transform the way we live."

- Andrew Church, University of Brighton



LOOKING AHEAD

RIC Annual General Meeting 2020

On September 22-24, 2020, Research Impact Canada held its virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM). The meeting was attended by 39 RIC members from across the 20 network institutions. The meeting consisted of a discussion on knowledge mobilization success/failure stories, sharing of best practices/learned experiences, review of skills and tools, strategic planning for RIC, and committee work. An evaluation of the meeting showed that there was a widespread agreement that the 2020 AGM was high quality, provided useful information, and contributed to RIC members' learning goals. Read the AGM Evaluation Report [here](#).

2021 and Beyond

More than ever, RIC commits to meaningful engagement and learning about EDI within the knowledge mobilization landscape. We started conversations from an operational lens of reducing barriers in RIC events, activities, and membership, as well as a strategic lens of RIC's role in promoting EDI in Canada's research and knowledge mobilization landscape. RIC will continue these important conversations throughout the next year and beyond.

With increased capacity, RIC has a newfound appetite to engage non-university members, understanding the benefits of multiple interdisciplinary sectors. With the potential to share more learnings, any members (university or otherwise) would have a strong research core to knowledge mobilization. This is a primary focus for RIC to engage in early 2021, potentially piloting an affiliate membership status first.

We are also making a concentrated effort for RIC to be more bilingual. With the creation of a Bilingualism Committee, we look forward to ensuring that RIC is more accessible to French/English bilingualism at all levels.

RIC has grown substantially in the past year, both in university members and with full-time staff capacity. It will be thrilling to see what RIC will achieve next year.

GET IN TOUCH!

Here are ways to stay connected and up to date about RIC activities.



Research Impact Canada Website

Check out the [RIC Website](#) for our latest blog posts, journal clubs, knowledge mobilization resources and more!



Newsletter

RIC's monthly newsletter highlights news from the network and shares opportunities upcoming events and opportunities in knowledge mobilization. **[Sign up to stay up to date!](#)**



Social Media

Connect with us on our social media – we're active on both [LinkedIN](#) and [Twitter!](#)

JOIN THE NETWORK!

Interested in becoming a part of the Research Impact Canada Network? RIC is seeking new academic members who are actively building their knowledge mobilization capacity, including Canadian and international institutions that have:

- Documented commitment to institutional knowledge mobilization and research impact: an established university plan, research plan, engagement plan, or other document that identifies knowledge mobilization or a related activity as an institutional priority
- Established investment in knowledge mobilization supports (such as community/public engagement, CBR, research support, communication, social innovation)
- Desire to share their expertise as well as learn from others

If this describes your institution, please send us an email at [info@researchimpact.ca!](mailto:info@researchimpact.ca)