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# ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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This report was prepared by Sylvia Urbanik, Senior Knowledge Mobilization Specialist at Research Impact Canada.

## This year's highlights



Welcomed 8 new members



Launched the Peter Levesque Award for Knowledge Mobilization Leadership



Launched 1 new module



Expanded MobilizeU offerings

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR: *GROWTH*

I always enjoy the opportunity to reflect on the year as I write the Director's Message for the Research Impact Canada (RIC) Annual Report. This past year has been one of remarkable growth. Typically, we embrace one or two new members annually, but this year saw a record eight new additions, each contributing distinct perspectives and expertise and expanding the richness of our network.

The substantial increase in RIC membership is a testament that institutions are finding their membership valuable. This was also confirmed by previous network evaluations, which demonstrated that the content offered by Research Impact Canada is both useful and used. The diverse expertise brought in by our first funders, first family foundation, and first college enhances the knowledge within the RIC Network. Having new perspectives is hugely valuable -- the expertise of the members is what drives the content for RIC.

Bringing in new members is one thing, but helping eight of them navigate RIC's varied activities is another challenge. We've set up a new member engagement group to make sure they're well-supported onboarding to all things knowledge mobilization.

Finally, our RIC team is also experiencing growth. Connie Tang (Director, Strategy and Business Development) joyfully welcomed Eleanor to her family, while Stephen MacGregor, (Assistant Professor, University of Calgary, and RIC Evaluation Ninja), welcomed George, marking the addition of two cherished "baby mobilizers" to our extended RIC team.

Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to sharing more successes and insights in the upcoming year.



**David J. Phipps, PhD., MBA**

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



## Who We Are

Research Impact Canada is a pan-Canadian network of 30 institutions with a goal of maximizing the impact of academic research for the public good. We are mostly comprised of Canadian universities, but our membership has expanded to include three UK Universities, one college, and several non-university members.



**30**

Institutions  
and counting



**100+**

People dedicated  
to Research  
Impact



**17**

Years of turning  
research into  
action

## What We Do

We are a national leader in supporting universities and other organizations to create value and impact from knowledge. Through a focus on sharing best practices, co-developing resources, and delivering training in knowledge mobilization (KMb), we help build institutional capacity to turn knowledge into action.

We help build institutional and organizational capacity through:



Delivering training in key KmB areas such as impact planning, compelling communications, effective stakeholder engagement, impact evaluation, and more



Developing and sharing tools and resources that help create impactful research and meaningful engagement



Facilitating a national bilingual community of practice where members have opportunities to engage in active dialogue, share best practices, and contribute unique content in their areas of expertise

## MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBERS:



**Lakehead University**, a research-intensive institution, actively engages in knowledge mobilization through its Office of Research Services. With 14 research centers, many equipped with dedicated knowledge mobilization specialists or knowledge brokers, Lakehead focuses on targeted Kmb efforts aligning with their diverse research areas, including healthcare ethics, healthy aging, and youth development.



**University of Windsor**

The **University of Windsor**, known for its diverse research community, is a leader in studies related to healthy Great Lakes, border understanding, and sustainable communities and industry. Aiming to bolster faculty support for mobilizing scholarship and research knowledge, UWindsor researchers are contributing policies and technologies that enhance human experiences while addressing the challenges of a changing world.



Renowned globally for its research and innovation, the **University of Waterloo** envisions a community of curious, collaborative and innovative problem-solvers. With a focus on co-op and work-integrated learning, they are committed to understanding and identifying equitable and sustainable solutions for the future through knowledge mobilization.



**A LEADING POLYTECHNIC  
COMMITTED TO YOUR SUCCESS**

The **Northern Alberta Institute of Technology** is the first college to join the RIC network. As a polytechnic, their operational model centers on applied research, collaborating directly with industries, Indigenous communities, and other organizations. Kmb is a critical aspect of NAIT's applied research centres, which is exemplified by the development of training and field courses, webinars, instructional videos, and more.

## MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBERS:



Joining as the third international affiliate member, the **University of York** is dedicated to collaborative engagement with businesses, charities, governments, and the public. With a vision of a "University for Public Good," their activities in research, teaching, and engagement address environmental, societal, and economic challenges, contributing to transformative technology and positive societal impact.



**Brain Canada Foundation**, the first funder to join the RIC Network, is a national charity that supports excellent, innovative, paradigm-changing brain research in Canada. With a mission to accelerate, amplify, and fund brain research across the country, Brain Canada brings a focus on bold science for brain health to the RIC community.



Established to improve the well-being of Canadian Armed Forces veterans suffering from chronic pain, the **Chronic Pain Centre of Excellence for Canadian Veterans (CPCoE)** acts as a research funder and a hub for community-engaged scholarship. Committed to an integrated approach to knowledge mobilization, CPCoE promotes early planning for research impact.



Championing health research, innovation, and biodiversity restoration, the **Weston Family Foundation** takes a collaborative approach to philanthropy. As a forward-thinking partner, they aspire to find transformational ways to improve the well-being of Canadians, aligning with RIC's commitment to lasting impacts through knowledge mobilization.

# ANNUAL MEETING 2023

Research Impact Canada hosts an annual meeting for our members as an opportunity to connect, exchange ideas and resources, and imagine initiatives and priorities for RIC's future. This year's meeting took place in a hybrid format from September 20-22, 2023 at the University of Calgary. The agenda included presentations from Research Impact Canada members as well as guest speakers and allowed members to discuss what works and (and what doesn't) in their practice.

We extend a HUGE thank you to the University of Calgary's Knowledge Engagement team, RIC's Kmb and Operations teams, and all the presenters who made it an engaging event. We had 35 in-person attendees and 25 virtual attendees from various RIC member institutions across Canada (and the UK). We hope you enjoyed learning from each other and connecting with like-minded peers. Next year's meeting will be taking place in Ottawa!

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

Research Impact Canada's committees continue to drive initiatives across the network. We recently updated our governance structure to better reflect the needs of our growing membership. Here's what our committees are currently working on.

### **Member Engagement Committee**

Formerly known as the 'Full Governance Committee', each institution in the network is invited to have members sit on this committee to provide member input and recommendations. It gives all members an opportunity to engage with the initiatives of the network. Decisions made by the Member Engagement Committee will be brought forth to the newly formed Implementation Committee.

### **Implementation Committee**

Formerly known as the 'Governance Steering Committee', this committee was restructured with representation from 11 members across the network. The Implementation Committee is responsible for implementing the 2024-2027 RIC Strategic Plan and has operational oversight on membership and budget decisions.

# COMMITTEE UPDATES

## Professional Development (PD) Committee

RIC's Professional Development Committee is focusing on sharing learning opportunities and good practices in KMb across the network. The committee is focused on developing new webinars and resources for Institutional Knowledge Mobilization planning.

## Evaluation Committee

The evaluation committee has recently approved a new proposal from Steve MacGregor (University of Calgary, Faculty of Education) that will have three goals:

- 1) Case studies of how RIC has created value for members;
- 2) Impacts of institutional KMb roles/units; and
- 3) A suite of indicators for RIC member institutions' commitments to KMb and research impact.

## Francophone and Bilingualism Committee

Recently renamed to the 'Francophone and Bilingualism Committee', this group continues to advance bilingualism efforts in the network. The committee is currently working on the implementation of RIC's bilingualism guidelines, as well as facilitating more opportunities for inclusion of French content in the network's activities, such as creating more French-first content and resources around KMb.

## MobilizeU Committee

The MobilizeU Committee has been working to create additional content for MobilizeU – RIC's 8-week knowledge mobilization training. Course content includes pre-recorded and live video lectures, topic summaries, and resource lists for additional reading. This year, the core content of the program was offered bilingually for the first time.

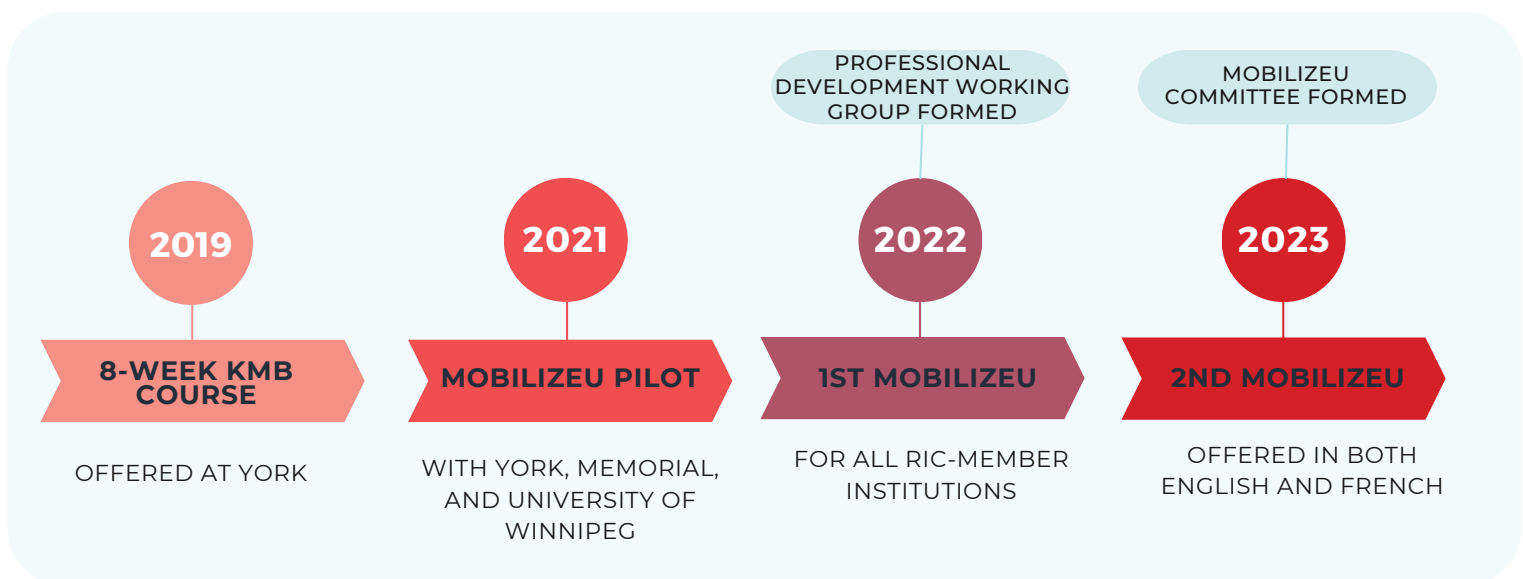
## Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Thinking Group

Meeting on an 'as needed' basis, this group brings together individuals from across the network to explore the intersections of EDIA and KMb. The group has advised on how to incorporate EDIA principles into RIC's work, including in the shaping of the forthcoming strategic plan.



# MOBILIZEU EXPANSION

This year, Research Impact Canada expanded MobilizeU – our flagship knowledge mobilization training. MobilizeU is an 8-week course designed for faculty researchers, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, staff, alumni, and community partners who are interested in knowledge mobilization. It has grown to be a collaboration that spans the across the entire network. This year the course was offered in both English and French and was open to 300 participants, including members of the RIC network and non-member institutions.



Course content includes pre-recorded and live video lectures, topic summaries, and resource lists for additional reading. In these sessions, researchers, practitioners, and community partners from across disciplines had the opportunity to share their knowledge and learn from others interested in knowledge mobilization.

Another exciting opportunity arose in 2023 when the Knowledge Mobilization Unit at York University was invited to deliver MobilizeU to the United Way of Greater Toronto. Over 200 participants from 124 United Way agencies joined to enhance their capacity to mobilize knowledge and become effective research partners.

Mobilize U is continuing to expand – in the spring of 2024, Simon Fraser University (SFU) will be piloting their own version of the course. Adapted from the Research Impact Canada MobilizeU summer program, this course will cover a different topic in KM each week featuring presentations from local KM experts in the region and core content from the original course.

# WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR

## NEW MODULE!



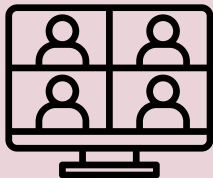
This year, Research Impact Canada launched *KMb101: Introduction to Knowledge Mobilization*. This free, self-paced online module introduces key concepts in knowledge mobilization and demonstrates how they can be applied in different contexts to help create impact. This module is part of a series of self-paced modules designed by RIC, each focused on a specific knowledge mobilization skill.

## NEW AWARD!



This year, we launched the *Peter Levesque Award for Knowledge Mobilization Leadership*. This award will recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to advancing knowledge mobilization as a profession. The inaugural award will specifically recognize those whose efforts have built the capacity of others to do knowledge mobilization work, whether through training, mentorship, program development, tool creation, or other methods.

## NEW 'DR. RIC' FORMATS!



As our membership grows, we've continued to experiment with the format of our monthly '*Dr. RIC*' calls. The past year saw the highest engagement we've ever seen. This year's calls included guest speakers from various organizations, such as The Canadian Museum of Nature and The Ontario Science Centre. Topics have included effective knowledge mobilization strategies, KMb in the social sciences and humanities fields, and presentations from members about initiatives on their campuses.

# RIC ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The Research Impact Canada Engaged Scholarship Award recognizes students who have contributed to engaged scholarship, co-creation of knowledge, or knowledge translation. This year we hosted a fourth round of the award. The following outstanding students won.

## Masters recipients

**Ashley Kyne**, Simon Fraser University - Criminology

**Project:** *A Culturally-Informed Examination of Correlates of Crime among Indigenous Peoples*

**Jasmine Kowalewski**, University of Alberta - Clinical Child Psychology

**Project:** *Exploring the Effects of Activism: Promoting Indigenous Youth's Voices*

**Vida Forouhar**, Concordia University - Health and Exercise Science

**Project:** *Weight Bias: Trends among the Canada Public and Relationships with Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour*

## Doctoral Recipients

**Yehudis Stokes**, University of Ottawa - Nursing

**Project:** *Identifying, Measuring, Implementing, and Evaluating Trauma-Informed Care in Practice*

**Erin Ratelle**, University of Alberta - Kinesiology, Sport and Recreation

**Project:** *Falls Prevention in Long Term Care using Machine Learning*

**Indira Riadi**, Simon Fraser University - Gerontology

**Project:** *Developing Inclusive Digital Mental Health Services / Interventions Based on the Mental Health Priorities of Community-Dwelling Older Adults*

## Honorable Mentions

**Sarah Law**, Simon Fraser University - Sociology

**Project:** *Resistance and Resilience in the Era of Ecological Grief*

**Yi Chien Jade Ho**, Simon Fraser University - Education

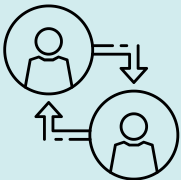
**Project:** *Place of the Chinatown Grassroots: Aligning Anti-Racism Efforts with Decolonization*

# FUTURE SKILLS CENTRE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Since 2019, Research Impact Canada has been partnering with the Future Skills Centre to support knowledge mobilization and help foster a network of innovative partners in the skills and workforce development sector. As part of this partnership, RIC is helping to support a Community of Practice (CoP) focused on the skills training and workforce development sector across the country.

This past year, we have been piloting and testing new and innovative approaches to peer-to-peer exchange and other ways of creatively mobilizing knowledge. During the pilot phase between April 2022 and December 2023, RIC led the implementation offerings in three areas, reaching 1,441 members.

## Connecting People to People



Connecting people across the sector who are preparing Canadians for the future of work. These offerings included 8 Peer Learning Groups, 1 cycle of Cohorts of Engagement, and 1 speed networking event.

## Connecting People to Knowledge



Delivering accessible, user-friendly curated products, research, and tools with actionable insights and innovative practices. These offerings included 6 Conversations to Community Newsletters, 12 Insight Bytes and 16 Water Cooler Chats.

## Connecting People to Learning



Connecting People to Learning - Facilitating learning and professional development opportunities led by experts. We hosted 9 professional webinars as well as roundtable discussions and expert networking events.

As we transition to the maturity phase, the RIC team will expand on key activities that have shown the most promise to enhance knowledge mobilization and further evaluate and address needs and gaps in the skills development sector.

## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT US

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“NAIT became a member of RIC in 2023 and we are thrilled to be part of this growing community. Personally, I have loved participating in MobilizeU, Dr RIC seminars, quarterly meetings for new members, and the regular member meetings. The most impactful part of those engagements has been a strong sense of community. I feel at home with my fellow knowledge mobilization specialists and I am excited to glean every little piece of guidance they have to offer.”

- Vicky Qualie, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

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*“The University of Calgary’s membership in Research Impact Canada has opened new doors for me as a professional – I’ve learned about exciting practices, tools and approaches from other member institutions and had the opportunity to connect with valued colleagues from across Canada and beyond. I believe that RIC’s approach to bringing people together, building capacity, and advocating for positive change is moving Canada forward in the realm of research impact and knowledge mobilization.”*

- Stephanie Warner, University of Calgary

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“Our membership with Research Impact Canada (RIC) is extremely beneficial to our graduate students at AU. It contributes to building a culture that promotes research excellence through participation in activities such as the Engaged Scholarship Award for which many of our students competed this year. Additionally, as we observed during the RIC presentation at our last Graduate Student Research Conference, RIC exposes graduate students to various knowledge mobilization channels that better meet the changing needs of today’s society and help disseminate research findings to diverse audiences, including beyond academia.”

- Dr. Simon Sigué, Athabasca University

## GET IN TOUCH!

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Here are ways to stay connected and up to date on 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 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!

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Interested in becoming a part of the [Research Impact Canada Network](#)? RIC is seeking new 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, community-based research (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)!