WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION (KT)?

As defined by CIHR, KT is the "dynamic and iterative process that includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically-sound application of knowledge to improve the health of Canadians, provide more effective health services and products and strengthen the healthcare system."

> **KT is the pathway to research outcomes and impacts.**
> Without KT, your research does not get into the hands of individuals and organizations who could use your knowledge.

Knowledge Synthesis	Contextualizing and integrating research studies within the larger body of knowledge on the topic.
Dissemination	Sharing research results by identifying the appropriate audience for the research findings and tailoring the message and medium to the audience.
Knowledge Exchange	Interactions between knowledge users and researchers resulting in mutual learning.
Ethically sound application of knowledge	The iterative process by which knowledge is considered, put into practice, or used. These activities must be consistent with ethical principles and norms, social values, and legal and other regulatory frameworks.
Knowledge user	An individual who is likely to be able to use research results to make informed decisions about policies, programs, and/or practices.

Table 1. KT terms from the Guide to Knowledge Translation Planning at CIHR: Integrated and End-of Grant Approaches

IMPORTANCE OF KT IN CIHR PROJECT GRANTS

KT is reflected in all three evaluation criteria: 1) Significance and Impact of Research; 2) Approaches and Methods; and 3) Expertise, Experience and Resources. This highlights the importance of integration despite dedicated KT plan or section within the application. KT is evaluated when assessing the project's feasibility, its potential for impact and the team's capability to achieve the proposed impacts.

> **Competitive applications must weave KT practices throughout the application.**
> This shows that you have developed a feasible route to achieve your planned research outcomes

WHAT ARE CIHR'S APPROACHES TO KT?

Integrated KT
Involves knowledge users as equal partners from project start to finish to increase relevance of research and likelihood of uptake.
End-of-grant KT plan required for this approach

End-of-Grant KT
Activities aimed at the diffusion, dissemination, or application of research findings. Includes the development of products and services, including commercialization.
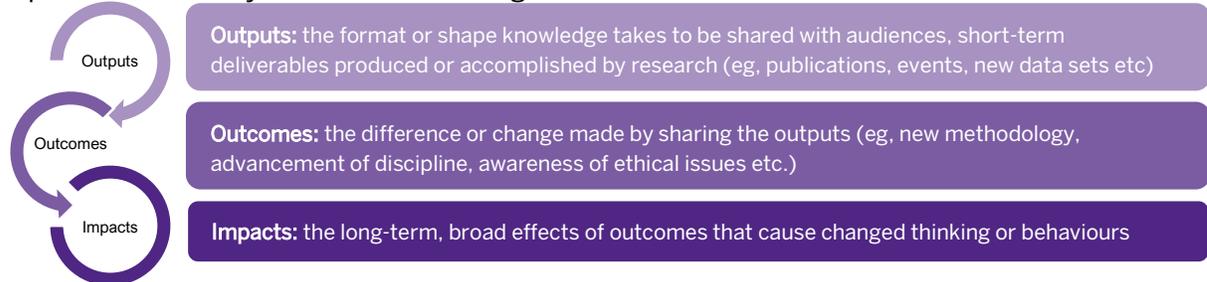
Generally, an iKT approach demonstrates a stronger commitment to research uptake and impacts. If deciding to take an iKT approach, ensure your application demonstrates:

- Engagement of non-academic partners and/or knowledge users from the conception of the project, so that KT principles are part of the entire research process
- How your project has been validated as important to partners and/or knowledge users
- How partners and/or knowledge users will be meaningfully involved in informing the project and/or using or adapting the results
- A well-thought-out plan for meaningful end-of-grant KT as well
- Details of partner/knowledge user contributions (cash and/or in-kind)

NOTE: If you select the Partnered/iKT special consideration in your application, at least one of your knowledge users and/or partners must be a Principal Applicant.

COMPONENTS OF A KT PLAN

Set KT goals that align with your research project and the expected outcomes/impact. The Western Research Knowledge Exchange & EDI Tool can help you think through your KT Plan ensuring it is appropriate, tailored to your research and targeted diverse audiences, and innovative.

Outputs

Outcomes

Impacts

Outputs: the format or shape knowledge takes to be shared with audiences, short-term deliverables produced or accomplished by research (eg, publications, events, new data sets etc)

Outcomes: the difference or change made by sharing the outputs (eg, new methodology, advancement of discipline, awareness of ethical issues etc.)

Impacts: the long-term, broad effects of outcomes that cause changed thinking or behaviours

In addition to listing research outputs, outcomes, and impact, strong KT plans describe the WHO, WHAT, HOW, WHEN, AND WHY:

WHO	The specific audiences you will target and why. Groups to consider: **Academic** (researchers in your field or other fields, students); **Government** (policymakers and legislators – local, provincial, national levels); **Professional associations/practitioner groups; Non-governmental organizations** (related charities, advocacy organizations, service organizations, think tanks, international bodies such as OECD, WHO); **Public** (patients, patient groups, families, local residents, specific groups predominantly affected by a disease); and **Businesses/industry.**
WHAT	The key messages you will convey for each audience and the outputs you will use to relay this information. Each audience should have one or more outputs tailored for them. An effective plan will involve multiple audiences and multiple outputs. **Products**: websites, executive summaries, datasets, videos, toolkits, journal articles, book chapters, policy briefs, podcasts, fact sheets, literature reviews, methodologies, reports **Events**: conference presentations, panels, webinars, stakeholder meetings, workshops, training sessions, exhibitions, performances, guest lectures, educational outreach activities **Media**: social media, traditional media, list-servs, communities of practice **Commercial**: patents, licenses, spin-out companies, product development
HOW	How will you consider the context and needs of your audience/knowledge users? Explain what resources and/or expertise you will access to do this work. Who will get the research into the hands of your audience(s) via the planned output? Consider where/who your target audience gets their information from. How will you know if you have achieved your goals? Build in strategies to measure uptake and impact (e.g., social media analytics, # of downloads, # of attendees etc.)
WHEN	When will each KT activity occur? At what point in the research process? Include a feasible timeline for completing your KT plan.
WHY	What are you hoping the audience will do with this information (e.g., revisit their practice guidelines, share among their networks, change their policies, invest in your product, have more awareness of an issue)? What would be the ultimate benefits to health, the economy, society, culture, or environment? Summarize the anticipated outcomes and impacts to underscore the significance of your research.

Table 2. Essential components of a KT Plan, to be incorporated into appropriate sections of the application package.

💡 **Organize your KT plan in a way that is easy to follow.** For example, you might write separate paragraphs for each audience/knowledge user or describe the plan by year. Provide a visual timeline using a GANTT chart.

TIPS FOR INTEGRATING KT INTO YOUR APPLICATION

Use CIHR language and follow recommendations. There are many ways to do KT. Review CIHR's detailed instructions, align your plan with CIHR's approach(es) and evaluation criteria (Significant and Impact of the Research and Feasibility).

- Journal articles must be freely available online within 12 months of publication ([Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#)), consider utilizing open access forms of dissemination including open access publications, websites, publicly accessible databases and/or Western's institutional repository [Scholarship@Western](#).
- Commercialization is a component of KT that brings intellectual property (new products, tools, or services) to use in private, not-for-profit, or public sectors. The project grant considers commercialization as part of the Commercialization (CMZ) peer review committee. See the [CIHR website](#) for specific definitions and evaluation criteria.

Build on existing partnerships and experiences. Describe the interest, investment, groundwork already in place among potential partners and knowledge users. Detail the experience and expertise your team has in KT practices. This increases feasibility of your plan by demonstrating commitment to the success of your research and the capacity of your team to achieve your KT goals.

Integrate EDI principles. For example: describe how your activities will be created with the language, reading level, and accessibility needs of your knowledge users in mind; identify ways to respect limited resources and competing demands of partners/knowledge users; plan for training and other learning your team needs to do before engaging in these KT activities; describe who will own, control, and have access to data housed in your KT outputs; and, discuss how certain groups could be negatively impacted by your research and how you will manage this risk.

Be clear and specific. Show that you have a well-thought out, detailed, and creative plan, not a generic or vague one. For example, which policymakers do you plan to engage, specifically? How many attendees are expected at the conference, and from what field(s)? How often will you post on social media? What platform(s), account(s) and hashtag(s) will you use and why?

Make your plan feasible. Ensure you allocate adequate expertise, time, and budget to do the work.

Allow for flexibility. Note that your KT plan will adapt to evolving knowledge user needs and/or the data that emerges.

RESOURCES

- [Knowledge Exchange and Impact at Western Research](#) (including links to tools)
- [Guide to KT Planning at CIHR: Integrated and End-of-Grant Approaches](#)
- [CIHR KT Resources and Training Tools](#)
- [CIHR Project Grant Peer Review Manual](#)
- [SickKids Knowledge Translation Training and Resources](#)
- [Research Impact Canada Resources](#)

Contact **Kristen Reilly** (kreill2@uwo.ca | Knowledge Mobilization & Research Impact Specialist, Western Research) for support and assistance.