Knowledge Translation for CIHR Project Grants

Competitive applications must weave Knowledge Translation (KT) practices throughout the application. There is no dedicated section for a KT plan; however, KT is reflected throughout the evaluation criteria.

What is Knowledge Translation?

As defined by CIHR, Knowledge translation (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."

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. CIHR Definitions Related to Knowledge Translation.

Why is KT important?

KT is the pathway to research outcomes and ultimate impacts. Without KT, your research does not get into the hands of individuals and organizations who could use your knowledge. Integrating KT into your whole application shows that you have developed a feasible route to achieve your planned research outcomes.

KT goals listed by CIHR include:

- Increasing knowledge or awareness
- Informing future research
- Informing or changing attitudes, behaviours, policies, practices, or technologies

Other KT goals could include:

- Enhancing the relevance and quality of your research through the involvement of non-academic partners, collaborators, and advisors within the research process
- Enhancing public understanding of science
- Attracting research funding
- Working towards ultimate economic, social, health, or cultural benefits
- Elevating the profile of the project/researcher/lab/unit
- Building skills in the research team to do KT activities

Components of a KT plan

WHO	The specific audiences you will target, and why. Groups to consider: - Academic audiences (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) - Businesses/industry
WHAT	The key messages you will convey for each audience, and the outputs you will use to relay this information – such as: - PRODUCTS: websites, executive summaries, datasets, videos, toolkits, journal articles (consider open access), 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 Each audience should have one or more outputs tailored for them. An effective plan will involve multiple audiences and multiple outputs.
HOW & WHEN	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? At what point in the research process? How will you consider the context and needs of your audience/knowledge users?
WHY	Explain how each activity aligns with your KT goals. Critically, what are you hoping the audience do with this information? Will they revisit their practice guidelines? Share among their networks? Change their policies? Invest in your product? Have more awareness of an issue? Based on your expected findings, what would be the ultimate benefits to health, the economy, society, culture, or environment?

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

Tips for Integrating KT into your Application

Use CIHR language and recommendations. There are many ways to do KT. Review CIHR's detailed instructions, align your plan with CIHR's approach and their evaluation criteria of *Significance and Impact of the Research* and *Feasibility*.

Choose between an end-of-grant and integrated KT approach and follow the requirements for these. CIHR differentiates between end-of-grant and integrated KT (iKT) approaches. 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)

Build on existing partnerships and experiences. Describe the interest, demand, investment, or groundwork already in place among potential partners and knowledge users as well as experience or expertise your team has in KT practices. This demonstrates 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 the limited resources and competing demands your knowledge users and partners may have.
- 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.
- Discuss how certain groups could be negatively impacted by your research, and how you will manage this risk.

Be clear and specific. 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? Which social media? Show that you have a well-thought out, detailed, and creative plan, not a generic or vague one.

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

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

Commercialization

The project grant considers commercialization process as part of the Commercialization (CMZ) peer review committee. Commercialization is a component of KT that brings intellectual property (IP) (new products, tools, or services) to use in private, not-for-profit, or public sectors. See the CIHR website for specific definitions and evaluation criteria.

Resources

- Knowledge Exchange and Impact at Western Research (including links to tools and contact information for the KEx and Impact team)
- Guide to KT Planning at CIHR: Integrated and End-of-Grant Approaches
- CIHR KT Resources and Training Tools
- CIHR Project Grant Peer Review Manual
- CIHR Commercialization Projects
- SickKids Knowledge Translation Training and Resources
- Research Impact Canada Resources