



Making the Connection: Lessons from the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development, Memorial University

Presentation to Making the Connection: Universities and Community Economic Development

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Director



Overview

- Harris Centre Overview
- Knowledge Mobilization
- Programs & Initiatives
- www.yaffle.ca
- The Harris Centre as Broker
- Conclusion: Key Points on Knowledge Sharing
- Future Partnerships or Opportunities?



Memorial University Community / Regional Engagement



- Faculties and Schools
- Marine Institute
- Student Organizations (eg. SIFE)
- Student Services, Service Learning
- Grenfell Campus, Corner Brook
- Labrador Institute
- Genesis Group / Springboard
- Gardiner Centre
- International Centre
- Etc., etc., etc.



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



Knowledge Mobilization:

Harris Centre Perspective



- Continuum of inside-out, outside-in and co-production

Ideally:

- Engage stakeholders to define issues / needs / opportunities
- Involve partners in knowledge generation
- Ground-truth findings to inform conclusions
- Recognize independence of researcher
- Dissemination / application have many champions...



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”
- Yaffle.ca



Responding to the Community: Example

Leading Tickles Marine Protected Area (MPA)

Exploits Valley Regional
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Requests Graduate Student
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The results

Funding for graduate student research
Research on MPA's for improved fishery/ coastal sustainability

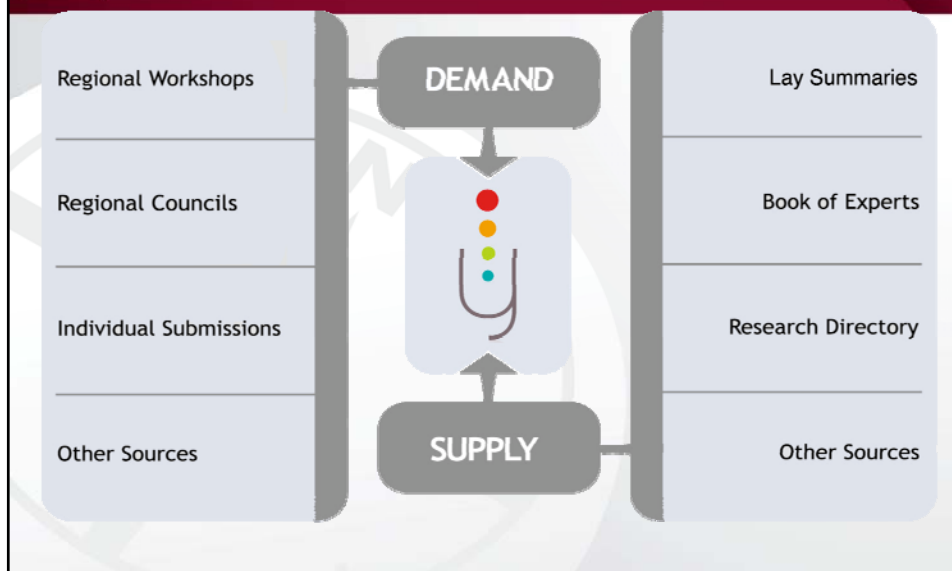


One-pager Successes

- Over 75 faculty connected;
- New ferry design for Strait of Belle Isle;
- Theatre training with kids in Lab West;
- Studying Boom and Bust in Northern Mining Towns (SSHRC);
- Alternate energy in two northern Labrador communities;
- Studying male underachievement in the education system;
- Four seminars on e-marketing (paired leaders), approx 200 businesses;
- SIFE student team working with aboriginal youth on financial sustainability of a cultural museum;
- Dialogues (e.g., regional cooperation, historical significance);
- Feasibility Studies (Bottled Water, Bacon-Wrapped Scallops);
- KT: (e.g., Agriculture in Stephenville; sheep farmers coyote management in Placentia)



A 'marketplace' for information





Yaffle Today



- Over 95,000 searches since public launch (Feb. 2009)
 - Accessed from 181 countries over 6 continents
 - Average of 125 users per day
- Graduate Students using Yaffle for thesis topics
- MITACS Identification of Internships
- Government, Community and Media constant users
- 2011 (so far) – over 20 new brokered projects



Yaffle Statistics & Next Steps

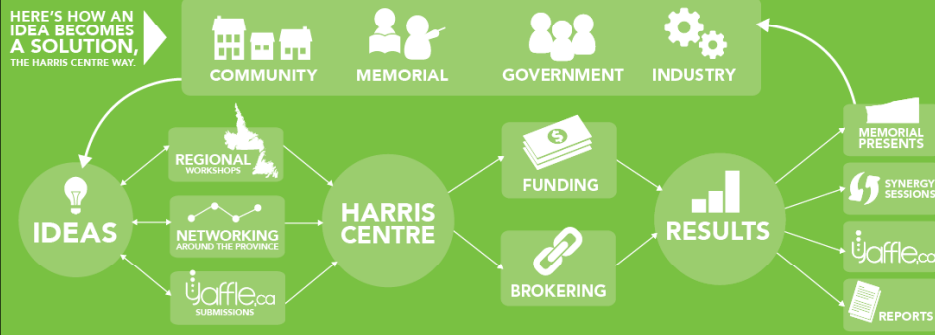


- 1550+ Lay Summaries
- 150+ Opportunities
- 900+ Researcher and Staff Expertise Profiles
- University of Alberta interest in adopting Yaffle; discussions under way
- Extension of Yaffle outside Memorial to research and knowledge mobilization partners within NL





Harris Knowledge Mobilization Process



The Harris Centre as Broker

- Mirrors Marketing Function: Need to Identify 3 Components:
 - Demand: research, teaching, outreach “pull”
 - Supply: Memorial capacity to deliver; “push”
 - Champions: make it happen
- Clarify roles: Lead / Partner / Support
- Clarify commitments and implementation
 - Contract Management / Project Management
 - Monitoring and Evaluation
- Communicate!



Key Challenges



- Building the brand: inside and outside the university
- Faculty rewards for promotion and tenure
- Focus; “not lose sight of the mundane whilst chasing the exciting” (Newcastle U., June 2009)
- Maintaining independence while brokering projects requiring funding
- Patience, taking the High Road when dealing with university politics / posturing
- Don't over estimate capacity of community / NGOs / business / government, to engage
- Responding to demand; managing flow



Thank You!

Questions? Opportunities?!