

YorkSpace Collection

Work-Integrated Learning, Accessibility, Accommodations (WILAA)

Materials from SSHRC funded research project
AcTinSite (2020-2023).



AcTinSite Research Project Material

AcTinSite: Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Original Version Created January 2021

Summary

This document provides an overview of the AcTinSite knowledge mobilization (KMb) plan. This document includes a summary of KmB theory guiding this project and details about the plan's components. Before learning about how AcTinSite views KmB, you will be introduced to the project's political objectives and the differences between KmB and participatory action research.

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Project Plan in A Knowledge Mobilization Model

Knowledge	Dissemination	Uptake	Implementation	Impact
Knowledge Creation	Knowledge Sharing	Engaging with Knowledge	Knowledge Use	Measuring Impact
Gaps Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative Document Analysis • Interview Study • Design Charrette Participatory Design (PD) Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Lived Experience Expert Panel • Action and Design Briefs • Wireframes and iterative prototype 	PD Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Plan • User Profiles • Journey Map • System Map • Theory of Change PD activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KMb/Stakeholder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal Org. Sharing ○ Grey Literature • Scholar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conferences ○ Articles ○ Chapters 	Community of Practice (Scale Up Phase) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs Assessment • Recruitment Plan • Communication Plan • Develop Charter • Establish Governing Body 	Community of Practice (Sustainability Phase) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network Events • Relationships Building • Skill Sharing • Mentorship 	Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Network Analysis • Community Analysis • PD Activities • For online platform (Multiple)

Knowledge

In this phase, we focus on gaining new knowledge about accommodations during work-integrated learning (WIL) to help us identify gaps and sites of intervention. The new knowledge assists us in figuring out what kind of intervention AcTinSite will design to make it easier for all involved in the WIL accommodation process.

Interviews and Document Analysis

A qualitative document analysis, focusing on grey literature, of materials that guide the accommodations process in WIL helps us identify what information and knowledge are already available. In addition, interviews with practitioners and students assist us in gaining a vital first-person account of the WIL Accommodation process.

Participatory Design

Participatory designs in AcTinSite are a collaborative process where researchers, partners, and disabled students come together. One of the participatory designs activities we use is design charrette. We bring everyone together over three or four days to identify opportunities and challenges, brainstorm solutions, and rank solutions with the most potential benefits. Other participatory processes are the expert panel and user testing, which consult with partners and disabled people.

Dissemination

Dissemination focuses on learning specific knowledge sharing in either accommodation or WIL processes within higher educational institutions (HEI) or WIL sites. These details help shape the forms our knowledge outputs and products take.

Uptake and Implementation

To develop a scalable (moving outside of healthcare) and sustainable space for the AcTinSite research knowledge and created intervention, we work with partners, disabled people, and practitioners to create a community of practice (CoP). The CoP aims to empower practitioners and institutions to learn about barriers, think creatively to find accommodation solutions, and challenge the requirement of disability disclosure.

Community of Practice

Communities are a tool used within KMB to gather people together to help increase motivation for using research evidence, building relationships between people working in particular areas, and as a tool for effective sharing of knowledge and information.

The community of practice aims to address specific knowledge mobilization needs.

- Relationships
 - Serves to develop a network for sharing knowledge and for supporting each other to learn about accommodations in placements
- Scale-Up
 - Reaching people outside of our partners (nursing and healthcare) to build investment in AcTinSite
 - Build a broad audience for AcTinSite with a support system to help people navigate the site
- Sustainability
 - A governing body that will take over control of the CoP when the project ends
 - Creates space for negotiations about who owns and maintains AcTinSite at the end of the project

Impact

In the impact stage, we will evaluate the effect that the intervention and CoP have had on partner institutions. This evaluation will assist us in understanding what has worked, what did not work, and changes the CoP could make as it goes forward.

Evaluation

The knowledge mobilization evaluation explores four components of a knowledge mobilization plan. These components are reach, relevance, relationships, and results. The evaluation will explore these four components in the pilot of the online platforms, the design charrette, and the community of practice.

Knowledge Mobilization Logic Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short	Long	Impact
Apply for Funding	Networking with partners Developing KMb plan Write justification	Application for SSHRC Connection Grant	Successful access of funding to support the CoP.	Establish an organisation independent of AcTinSite focused on creating a learning network for WIL, accessibility, and accommodations.	Creating a space where WILL accessibility and accommodations are a priority for professionals to improve uptake and implementation of AcTinSite intervention.
Community of Practice	Monthly temporary board meetings	CoP charter, Comm plan, Recruitment plan, and Events,	The needed materials to establish a new organisation.	Prepare for a board that is independent of AcTinSite	Sustainability: An independent organisation that promotes the development of knowledge and skills in professionals related to accessibility and accommodation in WIL.
	Student & Professional panel	Panel on the topics of student and professional experience of accessibility and accommodation in WIL	Develop knowledge and skills in professionals	Establish a positive name for the CoP, so it becomes a trusted organisation	Creating social pressure where WILL accessibility and accommodations are a priority for professionals.
	Website & social media	Website and social media help share knowledge and recruit new members	Share details about the CoP and the events it hosts.	Actively recruit professionals interested in WIL accessibility and accommodation	Scale-up: Create an online space where professionals can gather to share knowledge, and network.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short	Long	Impact
Website	Design and host a website for AcTinSite.	An online space to share details about AcTinSite.	Share ways that people can participate in AcTinSite.	Archive the actions taken by AcTinSite while it was active.	Increased participation with AcTinSite for LEEP, Design Charrette, and User Testing.
Newsletter	Create and share a newsletter every two months.	A newsletter that contains updates, how people can participate, and new shareable materials.	Keep partners, LEEP members, and stakeholders up to date on AcTinSite.	Maintain interest in AcTinSite with our partners, LEEP members and stakeholders.	An active group of stakeholders is ready to use the intervention that AcTinSite creates.
Lived Experience Expert Panel (LEEP)	Meet with disabled students two or three times a year.	Guidance from LEEP members on the direction of the research project.	Gain input on project aims. Adjust project to meet needs of LEEP members.	Ensure that intervention created by AcTinSite is useful to disabled students.	An intervention that meets the needs of different stakeholder groups.
Whole Team	Meet with partners one to two times a year.	Guidance from partners on the direction of the project.	Gain input on project aims. Adjust project to meet the needs of partners.	Ensure that intervention created by AcTinSite is useful to professionals from higher education institutes or WIL sites.	An intervention that meets the needs of different stakeholder groups.
YorkSpace (WILAA)	Create the WILAA Community on YorkSpace.	WILAA space is available on YorkSpace.	Create a space for AcTinSite materials to be archived.	Access to AcTinSite materials exists after the project completes.	Long-term access to knowledge and materials created by AcTinSite.
	Prepare and create materials to share.	Share materials; academic and non-academic.	Create and upload materials to WILAA.	Access to AcTinSite materials after project completes.	Long-term access to knowledge and materials created by AcTinSite.

Political Objectives

AcTinSite aims to create a more inclusive workforce. The project works towards this aim by pursuing justice for people with disabilities in education and employment. AcTinSite pursues its aims by working on making WIL accessibility and accommodation easier.

AcTinSite understands disability as a form of political and relational diversity. We mean that disability is not something found within a person. Instead, society limits people with diverse bodies and minds. Thus, disability is created through physical and social barriers, interacting with diverse bodies and minds. We acknowledge that people with diverse bodies and minds may experience the world differently or have difficulties because of their diversity.

We believe it is essential to be aware that disability intersects with other forms of oppression. Therefore, AcTinSite explores the effects of gender inequality, racism, and classism on people pursuing education and healthcare employment.

AcTinSite acknowledges and tries to work towards decolonisation as they work within and for settler-colonial institutions. Specifically, AcTinSite researchers and research teams engage in decolonial reflection regularly.

Knowledge Mobilization and Participatory Action Research

The recommended approach for the AcTinSite project is to include both research approaches and knowledge mobilization (KMb), with PAR acting as a bridge between them. PAR is commonly used to support the consideration and use of KMb from the beginning, and throughout, a research project. AcTinSite believe it is vital for KMb to be an integrated part of the research project from the beginning, not just when the results are finished. However, we acknowledge that PAR has limitations, which is why we are exploring other ways to develop KMb into AcTinSite.

Knowledge mobilization (KMb) has a long history of farm and health research. Within both these areas of research where participatory action research (PAR) has become a central part of substantial research projects. But, we must be careful not to take PAR as a solution to all knowledge mobilization needs. PAR is a robust tool for ensuring research meets the needs of a group, and for assuring a small group engages with the results. But PAR only addresses the sharing of knowledge on a small scale.

Many KMb projects have broad-scale aims. These KMb projects aim to influence social policy or how institutions function. For these projects, PAR is a useful tool for the creation of new knowledge and information to be shared. But PAR will be only one part of a more complex KMb plan. The limitation of PAR is why the AcTinSite project has plans for both research and knowledge mobilization, with PAR acting as a bridge between them.

As well, when working on projects connected to marginalized communities, we must be sure not to rely on PAR as a solution to minimizing harm. At the same time, PAR is a positive move towards reducing damage to marginalized groups; it does not address all forms of possible injury. Instead, it suggests that projects have clear political objectives that include how the project will address potential harm. Without addressing these concerns, a project is likely to remain rooted in a complex system that continues to place power in those who run research projects.

What is Knowledge to AcTinSite?

In knowledge mobilization, the word ‘knowledge’ is a broad term used to catch the different kinds of ways we build and share what we know. Therefore, it is helpful to define what knowledge is in a specific project and set categories to distinguish between the different kinds of knowledge. Here we will define knowledge for AcTinSite in three types: knowledge, information, and data.

Data results from gathering ‘facts’ or ‘observations’ through a methodological process. Data has little meaning without a context, or question, to frame it within. An example of data is the gaps in resources found from the literature review and interviews.

Information develops through a process of giving context to data. For example, knowing where there are gaps in resources means little without the context of AcTinSite’s goal of improving accommodations in educational placements. In addition, information is thought of as independent, meaning that that context is easy to understand by others. Thus, within knowledge mobilization, information is understood to be easy to share.

Knowledge takes data or information and processes it through a person’s particular context. For the example of gaps in resources, knowledge is part of making decisions about what gaps AcTinSite can address. Different people will believe specific gaps in resources are a high priority based on their context. Personal context is understood to be influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors are a person’s beliefs and how they view the world. External factors are social, political, and economic systems that a person lives within. An external factor within AcTinSite is the academic field that people are trained in, influencing gaps in resources they think need to be addressed. The personal context of knowledge makes this a rich resource but challenging to share since no two people share the same unique context.

What does Knowledge Mobilization mean to AcTinSite?

This section provides an overview of the KMb theory, methods, and framework we use to guide our KMb work. While we primarily use social influence theory, we also use the s-curve from Diffusion of Innovation.

Social Influence Theory

Social influence theory aims to understand how different types of relationships and levels of trust affect the shifting of social norms. In this theory, social norms are the actions or behaviours that people take. Social norms are shaped by how you see other people acting or behaving (social modelling). A decision to adopt a social norm is affected by the pressure or support put on you by others to adapt to the social norm (social pressure). Social influence theory can be used in KMb when there is a focus on changing actions or behaviour. Still, there is limited control over the environments/social norms where the change may happen.

There are three ways to understand how people adapt or resist social norms. These are conformity, compliance, and obedience. Conformity happens when people want to adopt social norms. This action often happens because of a combination of information and normative influence. Information influence helps with accurately adapting social norms, while normative influence is the social pressure people are under to adopt social norms. Compliance described the process of actively agreeing to adhere to social norms. Finally, obedience happens in spaces with a significant difference in power, leading to a hierarchy. For example, when a person obeys a command from a person with more authority, they act through obedience.

For more resources on social influence explore the [Science Direct topic page](#).

Social Influence in AcTinSite

Using social influence theory to understand the goals of the AcTinSite projects KMb plan, we must think about – things.

What is the social norm?

The social norm that AcTinSite aims to change is increase importance of accessibility and accommodation in WIL. We plan to change this social norm through skill building and knowledge sharing.

- Build knowledge and confidence in students with disabilities to request and negotiate accommodations.
- Build knowledge and skills in instructors and student accessibility staff to advocate for and empower students.
- Build knowledge and skills for placement supervisors and other placement staff to support and negotiate accommodations.

How is a norm modelled?

A norm is mainly working with social pressure. AcTinSite does creates social pressure through the following.

- Develop a group of researchers, research staff, and partners who focus on finding resources, identifying gaps, creating resources to fill gaps, and developing an online platform for sharing resources.
- These groups create a gentle social pressure to adopt the norm into their lives.
- Creating a Community of Practice focusing on the discussion of how to improve accommodation in education placement. This group will include anyone involved in the research project (if they want to be) and people whose work connects to supporting student placements.
- Group will focus on the social norm, creating a gentle social pressure (and knowledge exchange and skill-building) to adapt it to their work.

What kind of social pressure is needed to get people to adapt to the social norm?

Compliance and conformity are the two factors expected to encourage people to adopt the social norm.

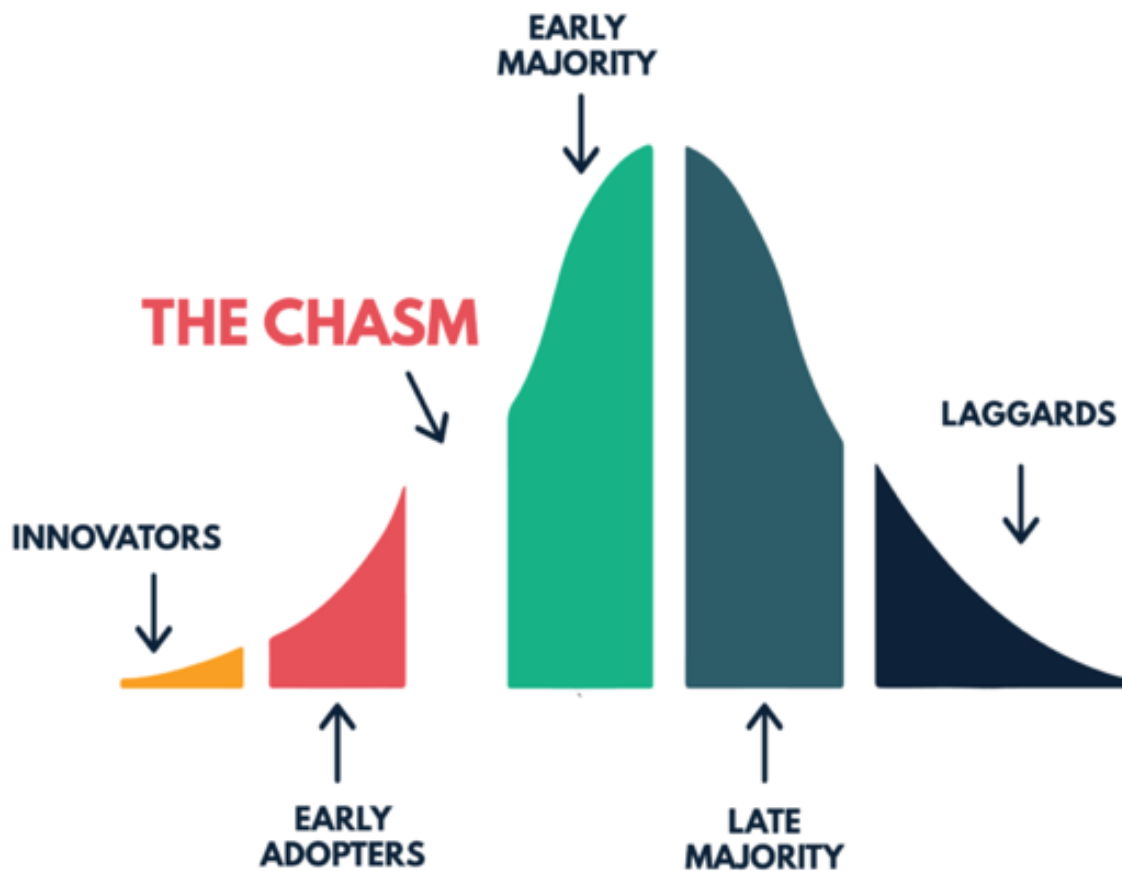
- Conformity is when people adopt the social norm through a combination of knowledge exchange (informational influence) and gentle social pressure (normative influence).
- Compliance happens when people make change because of an social or political obligation. There are laws in Canada and Ontario that outline expectations of accommodations.

Diffusion of Innovation S-Curve

While the social influence theory helps us understand how we expect knowledge to move through the AcTinSite project, it does not provide all the details we need. We need a theory to help us understand how to scale up and sustain the work we do in AcTinSite. Diffusion of Innovation theory is a standard KMb theory that can help understand scaling up KMb projects. We will work with a particular part of this theory, the Diffusion S-Curve, since social influence theory is our leading theory. The S-curve can also help to identify barriers to uptake and implementation.

Diffusion S-Curve

When scaling up a KMb project, the S-Curve focuses on the different groups of people who can use the knowledge of information. The division of these groups can help you identify the characterises of people within these groups, which can help you find the best ways to engage these people. The S-Curve can also be used to ask questions about who might be missing from these groups, barriers that could slow the uptake process, and identifying where it is difficult for knowledge sharing to happen.



The five groups are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. The five categories describe people who engage with information in different ways:

1. those who are quick to engage with new information or knowledge (innovators and early adopters),
2. those who engage when information or knowledge becomes popular (early or late majority), and
3. those who are resistant or have barriers to change (laggards¹).

¹ Some discussion has begun around the use of the term laggard in relation to the diffusion S-curve as some believe laggards hold harmful stereotypes. We want to acknowledge this discussion and are open to using new language as it is adopted by those working in knowledge mobilisation.

S-Curve in AcTinSite

During the 3-year AcTinSite project, we work with innovators and early adopters in the first part of the s-curve. Innovators are those who have been actively working within their organizations to better the accommodation practice in WIL. Partners fall into the early adopter category as they are working with the research team to bring knowledge together to be shared. Unfortunately, this works put most people working on AcTinSite on the left side of the chasm (see image above). The chasm describes the difficulty of moving knowledge from a small innovation space to a broader uptake that influences work on the provincial and national levels. Thus, AcTinSite must plan for scaling up its innovative online platform to process forward in the s-curve.

The development of the AcTinSite intervention is an attempt to move through the chasm. While AcTinSite is a tool to support the uptake and implementation of accommodation practices in WIL, it is not sufficient to bridge the chasm. Online spaces have vast amounts of information; there are algorithms that sort information when we use search engines; there are always new spaces to share information. A static online platform will get lost in the deluge of information online.

To address this concern, AcTinSite will work with practitioners to create a community of practice focused on accommodations in WIL. One barrier that we are aware of is the struggle to get placements outside of nursing to engage with the online platform. This limited reach is a concern because AcTinSite is working directly with two hospitals, focusing on nursing placements. Thus, we have partners from the field of nursing. However, placements take place in different educational programs at other institutions. The CoP is a space where anyone supporting WIL can gather to learn about and support providing accommodation in WIL. With a successful use of the CoP, we will build a more extensive network around this topic, bringing people from other fields who will represent our move through the chasm.

Terms

Accessibility: The ability of all people to enter and engage with a space in similar ways.

Accommodation: Adjustments made to a space or engagement based on the individual needs of a person.

Dissemination: A part of KMb that focuses on moving knowledge or information from one group to another.

Collaborators: People who are involved in AcTinSite but are sharing details or voicing opinions that are their own.

Compliance: A social pressure that encourages people of institutions to make changes that their peers have made.

Conformity: A gentle social pressure that encourages people or an institution to make changes.

Community of Practice: A group of like-minded people who gather to share knowledge on a specific topic.

Evaluation: A means of finding out if the actions planned has the expected affect.

Implementation: A KMb process that focuses on assisting people or institutions using new knowledge or skills within a specific context.

Knowledge Mobilisation: A umbrella term used to describe actions taken to move knowledge or information between groups.

Knowledge Outputs: 'things' that are generated within the research project, ... These 'things' include datasets, activity materials, analyses (of datasets), protocols, instruments, evidence, tools ... MB: ... I favour knowledge output (KO) as it is the most generic term.

Knowledge Products are 'things' that are created with the purpose of being shared with people outside AcTinSite to share knowledge or information.

Knowledge Translation: The process of taking research evidence and sharing it with knowledge users.

KMb Expert Panel: A groups of researchers, research staff, collaborators, and representatives whose aim is to find research evidence to fill gap in resources. They will take research evidence and create knowledge products.

Logic Model: A graphic used to show the activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts of a KMb plan.

Obedience: When a person or institution makes changes due to external or internal authority.

Participatory Action Research: A research methodology used to engage stakeholders throughout the enter research process.

Participatory Design: Design methodologies that use active engagement of stakeholders.

Political Objectives: The larger goals of a projects, in terms of desired impact on *decisions or actions or people or groups*. These objectives outline social impacts and impacts to marginalised groups.

Representatives: People who are involved in AcTinSite and are sharing details or voicing opinions on behalf of an institution.

Research Evidence is a form of knowledge and information that is created through the process of research methods.

Researchers: People called co-applicants on the SSHRC application.

Research Staff: People hired to support the AcTinSite project.

Research Team: Researchers and Research Staff.

Resources: Materials that are collected that provide details on accessibility in placement.

Scale Up: Process of building your stakeholder group.

Social Modelling: Part of social influence theory that suggests people will adapt changes when others are engaging in the behaviour around them.

Social Norms: A set of ways to behave, and actions taken that are supported by the other people in the environment.

Social pressure: When shifts happen to the social norms that pressure others to make changes too.

Sustainability: The ability for new knowledge or information to be taken up by people and institutions and maintained overtime.

Team Meeting: Meeting of researchers, research staff, collaborators, and representatives that happens twice a year

Uptake: KMB process that deals with people putting new knowledge or information into practice.

Work Integrated Learning: Umbrella term used to describe the different forms of an educational program where students get to practice skills in a worksite.