
Co-Creating the UBC Knowledge Exchange (Kx)

A Collaborator in the UBC Innovation Hub



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Policy Studio | UBC
Liu Institute for Global Issues

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CONTENTS

01. Executive summary	4
02. Introduction	5
03. Methodology	8
04. Summary of insights	9
05. The UBC Kx at a glance	16
06. Structure and Functions	17
07. Opportunity	21
08. Appendices	
1) The Kx Circle Members	22
2) Enhancing KMb@UBC participants	23
3) Co-Creating the UBC Kx participants	25
4) The Kx Studio Sessions	27
5) KM/Kx Research Timeline	28

01. Executive Summary

This report, *Co-Creating the UBC Knowledge Exchange* (2018) follows *Enhancing KMb@UBC* (2017) – a report that summarized an internal UBC exploration of how faculty members engaged in knowledge sharing, knowledge mobilization, and knowledge exchange – mainly in the policy realm. This exploratory research was a snap-shot of an ‘inward-facing’ view of the knowledge exchange world at UBC.

Co-Creating the UBC Knowledge Exchange, instead, takes an ‘outward-facing’ view by engaging UBC stakeholders (35) in business, government, NGOs and civil society. As a collaborator in the Innovation Hub at UBC, we are using the language Knowledge Exchange (Kx).

The research team conducted studio sessions and interviewed key members of our external community about how they currently access knowledge and expertise from UBC – what works and what doesn’t. The purpose of this report is to guide the creation of a unit Inside the UBC Innovation Hub that will serve both our internal UBC community of faculty, staff and students, as well as our external communities, including alumni. The insights from this research include the need for: a one-stop shop, a convening place, a physical

location, knowledge brokers, knowledge exchange and mobilization training, knowledge translation services, the measurement of impact, support for event organization and basic administration, faculty recognition and awards, the expansion of research and scholarship of knowledge exchange and mobilization, liaison with existing UBC units and external organizations, interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary cluster support, and an innovation culture across UBC.

The UBC Knowledge Exchange requires leadership and, most importantly, strong links and synergies with other collaborators in innovation at UBC: the University-Industry Liaison Office, entrepreneurship@UBC, UBC’s business innovation and community engagement offices. UBC has recently joined Research Impact Canada, a network of universities who are paying close attention to knowledge mobilization and knowledge exchange as part of their research and scholarship mandates. The opportunities are significant for UBC to learn from this network and to lead in developing innovative ways to share and exchange knowledge, to further impact our city, region, and the world.

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An international consensus is now emerging around a people-centred model of innovation for successful change in businesses, government and communities. [...] The new model calls upon us to re-ignite the relationship between knowledge and society.

- CHAD GAFFIELD
Former President of SSHRC

¹ The Kx or KM acronym is closely related to similar notions such as knowledge translation, knowledge transfer, knowledge exchange, broader impacts, outreach, or even extension.

02. Introduction

Beginning in 2016, UBC has concentrated efforts to understand, promote, and enhance support for knowledge exchange (Kx) activities.

Although knowledge exchange (Kx) has developed many context-specific definitions¹, UBC recognizes that the premise of any of these definitions is to respond to the challenge of making university-generated knowledge available to non-academic stakeholders. The primary goal of knowledge exchange (Kx) is to better serve its broad range of stakeholders, including: government, NGOs, industry, and the general public. Knowledge exchange is now conceived as a set of services, programs and activities that support UBC's commitment to have greater impact beyond the academy.

In addition to UBC's responsibility to the public, there is also a need to support knowledge exchange and/or mobilization services and training. Current requirements posed by most granting agencies are aimed at maximizing the impact of research funding. UBC's competitive standing as a research university requires focused investments in developing institutional mechanisms to ensure research remains competitive while maximizing its external impacts.

It is believed that knowledge exchange efforts and operations are better understood as services, programs, and initiatives that can be developed under a new innovative ecosystem – a responsive unit that should serve internal and external actors and that corresponds

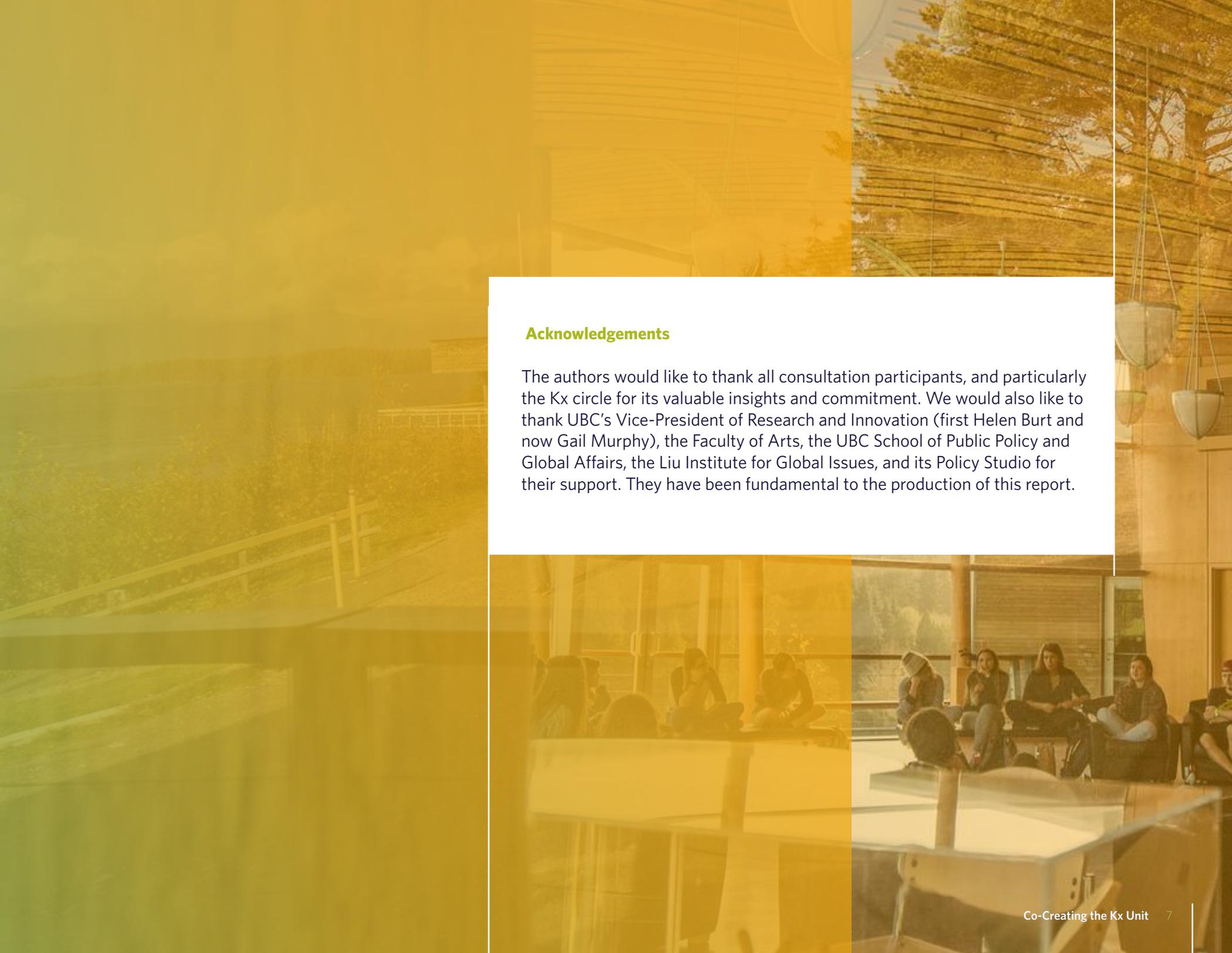
to the need for new and smart ways of engagement with our diverse communities.

This report is the conclusion of the project entitled *Co-Creating the UBC Knowledge Exchange* and is the continuation of the original *Enhancing KMb@UBC* project started in late 2016. The first project, and its subsequent report *Enhancing KMb@UBC*, brought groups of talented professors, staff and graduate students together to help UBC understand the scope of knowledge exchange activities that were already happening at UBC. Based on their input and experiences, a list of recommendations for enhancing knowledge exchange activities was published and forwarded to the Vice President of Research and Innovation. The continuation of this project, entitled *Co-Creating the UBC Knowledge Exchange (Kx)*, now responds to the need to research and consult UBC's vast community of external stakeholders to comprehend the knowledge exchange phenomena from the external stakeholder's perspective.

An important part of *Co-Creating the UBC Knowledge Exchange* involved the integration of the UBC Kx circle (originally KM and now re-named Kx), a multidisciplinary advisory group composed by UBC professors, staff and graduate students. The main purpose of this working group was to orient the search for external audiences and to help integrate internal and external insights for the production of this report.

Based on the experience of researching our diverse publics, the main objective of this report is to propose an organizational structure for Knowledge Exchange (Kx) – building on the integration of meaningful insights, ideas, and suggestions presented by UBC faculty, staff, graduate students, and representatives from industry, government, NGOs and the public.

² For complete information about the Kx circle, please review Appendix 1.



Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all consultation participants, and particularly the Kx circle for its valuable insights and commitment. We would also like to thank UBC's Vice-President of Research and Innovation (first Helen Burt and now Gail Murphy), the Faculty of Arts, the UBC School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, the Liu Institute for Global Issues, and its Policy Studio for their support. They have been fundamental to the production of this report.

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The data collection process involved a series of studio sessions using the strategic design method—a participatory process rooted in user research

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³ **The KMb canvas:** a tool designed to explore a knowledge mobilization journey including goals, challenges and impact.

Service journey: a tool that serves to map out holistically the interactions of an identified user with current or future service.

Empathy map: a tool whose focus is to explore the characteristics and interests of a specific user such as needs and wants.

03. Methodology

This report integrates the insights and ideas of UBC’s professors, graduate students and staff, as well as external stakeholders—mostly UBC partners representing government, industry, NGOs and the general public. The report also reflects ongoing consultations with leaders in the field of knowledge exchange in Canada and abroad.

The data collection process involved a series of studio sessions using the strategic design method—a participatory process rooted in user research in which participants discuss, co-create, test, and propose innovative solutions to big-picture or systemic challenges. During the studio sessions hosted at UBC Robson and at the Liu Institute for Global Issues, participants used various techniques such as KMb canvas, service journeys, and empathy maps.³ The data collection process also involved numerous one-on-one, semi-structured interviews at UBC Vancouver, UBC Okanagan, Kelowna, Victoria, and Ottawa.

As mentioned in the introduction, this project also involved the integration of UBC’s Kx circle—a diverse and select group of UBC representatives composed of faculty, staff and graduate students. Their insights, experiences and suggestions were instrumental for the development of this report.

04. Summary of insights

What follows is a compilation of the main insights and ideas proposed by internal and external stakeholders concerning how Knowledge Exchange (Kx) at UBC could best serve their needs. The Kx circle, rounds of consultations, and expert leaders validated these insights.



PLACE



PEOPLE



**PROGRAMS
AND
SERVICES**



**PROSPECTIVE
SERVICES,
RESEARCH
AND SYSTEMS**

1. One-stop shop

One of the main opportunities for knowledge exchange lies in the need to have a centralized location (physical and virtual). Currently, there is not such a recognized location, and there are different websites with distinct formats. UBC stakeholders are expressing confusion on how to find the right information, the right group of specialists, and the right program/discipline. This calls attention to a knowledge mobilization principle of “having the right information, at the right time, and in the right format”.

2. A convening place

A commonly expressed theme among the external communities consulted was the consistent reference to the social aspect of knowledge exchange. There were many references to the need to foster the social side of research relationships, and one of the ways expressed might be understood as having a convening place. A central, hospitable location was suggested where knowledge partners and interested members of the public can meet with researchers or knowledge experts to discuss ways to engage with UBC through consultation/use of research.

3. Physical proximity matters

The idea of having more UBC activities located at UBC Robson Square is gaining traction, particularly with the downtown Vancouver community. According to stakeholders, UBC’s main campus is far away and logistically complicated to reach. Therefore, having a more central convening space that can forge relationships and connections seems to have great potential.

4. Need for knowledge brokers

One of the distinct features of a knowledge exchange organization in a university is the presence of highly skilled professionals who serve as knowledge brokers. The key role for these specialists is to foster and broker relationships that have the potential for research impact in mind. As explored in the Enhancing KMb@UBC report, the principle of having research partners outside of academia increases the chance of uptake and use of knowledge, which is the basic principle of an integrated knowledge mobilization approach.

The work of the knowledge brokers will be supported by staff that will serve as wayfinding experts, as well as general administrative and logistical support to facilitate the operation of activities of the UBC Knowledge Exchange in relation to internal and external audiences.

5. Kx training is necessary

A core need expressed by the distinct internal audience, and some external audiences, refers to education in Kx. This includes training in aspects of knowledge exchange such as planning for impact, end-of-grant reports, consultations around the KM/KE/KT/KTE components of research proposals, legal aspects of research, innovative ways to communicate research, as well as various professional skills. Here, both graduate students and professors have shown marked interest. Kx training can also extend to partners or users of research, oriented toward supporting capacity development, meeting information/knowledge demands, updates, and providing facilitation services.

6. Knowledge translation service

A need was identified to develop mechanisms or services for published research to be translated into formats more appropriate for external audiences. Knowledge translation services might integrate well-developed tools such as plain language summaries, research snapshots, infographics, video, and digital applications. The UBC Knowledge Exchange will have the capacity to offer effective mechanisms and incentives to facilitate these types of services. The unit will be pushing the boundaries through thinking about new distribution channels and more creative ways of sharing knowledge.

7. Measure impacts

One of the distinctive features of the UBC Knowledge Exchange will be to determine appropriate metrics for external research impact. This might be the result of national and international benchmarks as well as rounds of internal consultations.

8. Support event organization & basic administration

A recurring theme expressed by the UBC internal groups was the administrative complexity to organize events where Kx activities might take place. This rests in basic but key activities (that often reduce the participation costs of external partners) such as reserving physical space, dealing with parking permits, quick and easy reimbursement of expenses, among others. It was recommended to have administrative duties in the hands of experts and/or facilitators, allowing the faculty to focus on the content, communication, and matters of research.

9. Faculty recognition and awards

One of the main barriers to Kx reported by faculty members is the lack of internal recognition of Kx activities. The UBC Knowledge Exchange might liaise with the VP Academic and the Faculty Association to develop ways to establish a recognized 'knowledge exchange path' that could provide a recognized record of scholarly activity. The UBC Knowledge Exchange might also develop innovative ways to continue socializing the importance of knowledge exchange by providing a place on faculty CV's to record Kx activities.

10. Expand research of Kx

Multiple consultations with faculty and staff reflect the need to continue research into the field of knowledge exchange (e.g. study of organizational constructs, impact measurement, science policy, interdisciplinary research models, as well as new mechanisms to better serve the diverse and distinct audiences). In the future, UBC could host an academic journal on knowledge mobilization/exchange.

11. Liaison with UBC units and external organizations

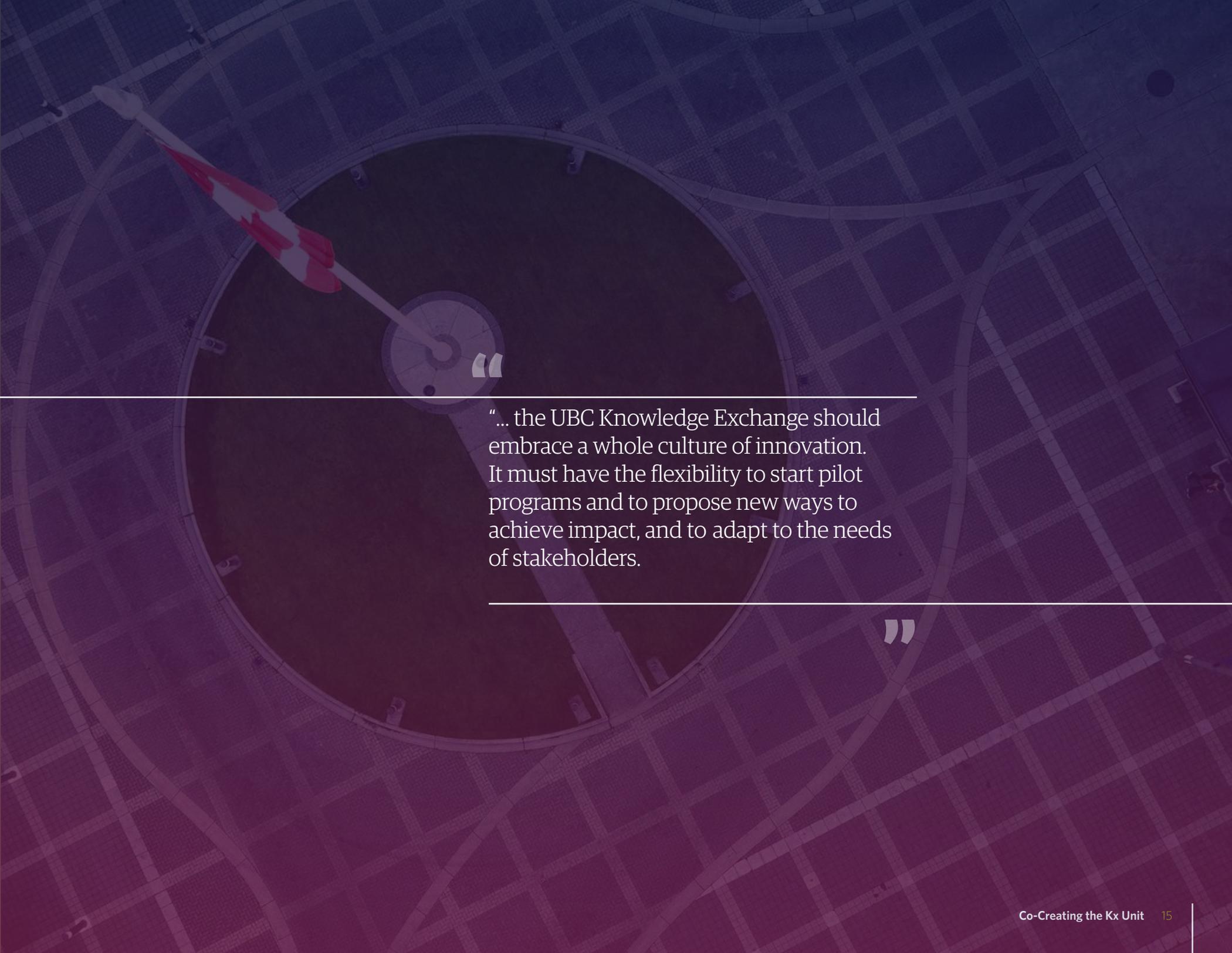
There is an important opportunity for improving 'knowledge management' from an organizational standpoint, to know 'who is doing what', and to develop mechanisms to partner with different UBC units/organizations, including UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan. The UBC Knowledge Exchange will also maintain its close connections with Research Impact Canada and other national and international organizations that support knowledge exchange, and inform best practices.

12. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary clusters

Many external contacts reported the need to be able to work with diverse groups of academics from various disciplines. The current disciplinary division of knowledge branches often represents a barrier to fully addressing complex problems proposed by stakeholders. The UBC Knowledge Exchange should foster clusters of researchers by theme, discipline, geographies, types of research, and propose incentives that allow interdisciplinary work.

13. Supports an innovative culture

Finally, the UBC Knowledge Exchange should embrace a whole culture of innovation. It must have the flexibility to start pilot programs and to propose new ways to achieve impact, and to adapt to the needs of stakeholders. This might imply instilling and promoting a culture of prospective thinking and rapid adoption of new needs, new audiences, and more effective ways to mobilize knowledge.



“

... the UBC Knowledge Exchange should embrace a whole culture of innovation. It must have the flexibility to start pilot programs and to propose new ways to achieve impact, and to adapt to the needs of stakeholders.

”

05. The UBC Kx at a glance

The UBC Knowledge Exchange integrates the aforementioned insights expressed by the UBC internal and external communities. It is proposed as a response to the current lack of a specialized unit to support increasing research impact at UBC.

The UBC Knowledge Exchange is proposed as a 'hub + spoke' model within the UBC Innovation Hub, maintaining a centralized innovative body ('UBC Knowledge Exchange') and 'spokes' which would be the people/groups dedicated to Kx, located in UBC faculties, and might be organized as clusters.

The UBC Knowledge Exchange will be a highly responsive workplace oriented to the brokerage of relations and creation of new initiatives and programs to maximize the value of research impact; and it will be a unique collaborator in the UBC Innovation Hub. The UBC Knowledge Exchange will benefit from the current expertise of the UBC Innovation Hub units such as Business Innovation, University-Industry Liaison Office (UILO), Commercialization & sponsored research, and entrepreneurship@UBC ("e@UBC").

Features of the Kx Unit:

- Creates a place for community inquiry for knowledge access and expert consultation;
- Integrates a unique body of knowledge brokers— staff members working closely with faculty and other UBC staff;
- Trains faculty and graduate students in knowledge exchange planning, preparation and reporting;
- Provides knowledge translation services;
- Measures and researches the non-academic impact of academic research to different audiences; and,
- Liaises with UBC units, departments and other organizations, promoting synergies and collaborative efforts.

06. Structure and Functions

Structure

The initial operation of the UBC Knowledge Exchange within the UBC innovation Hub reflects a synergistic culture and is expected to evolve corresponding to its internal positioning and expected growth in demand for services.

The following diagram represent a first and basic model of operation, and might grow depending on the demand of services and scope of activities.

Proposal of Knowledge Brokers

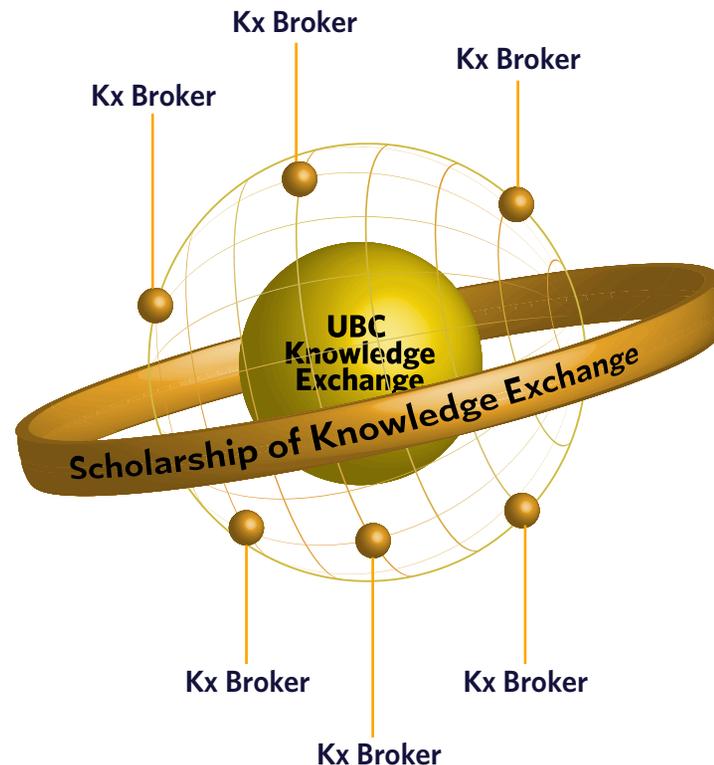
By disciplines:

- Arts and Education
- Law + Business
- Health professions
- Science
- Applied Science
- LFS and Forestry

Or by clusters:

- Arts and Culture
- Water and Food
- Knowledge Economy
- Energy and Resources
- Transformative Learning
- Food, Fibre, Fuel

***Examples only.**



Functions

Position	Main activities
Kx Manager / Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Oversees the overall strategies and management of Kx at UBC;▪ Works to develop synergies, and programs to enhance Kx services;▪ Oversees the overall operational (financial) budget;▪ Maintains close communication with the VP Academic, Deans and School Directors, as well as leaders of external communities;▪ Liaises with VP Academic and Faculty Association to improve recognition of Kx as scholarly activity;▪ Represents Kx programs and services within the UBC Innovation Hub; and,▪ Represents UBC in Research Impact Canada and supports the ongoing operationalization and internationalization of knowledge exchange.

Position	Main activities
Kx Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Supports the overall operation of the Kx brokers (hub + spoke model);▪ Elaborates university-wide reports on knowledge impacts per faculty, ranks, etc.;▪ Designs and implements innovative ways to socialize the importance of Kx for research impact among faculty and graduate students;▪ Supports the organization of Kx university-wide events;▪ Works in coordination with communication specialists to promote and socialize the idea of Kx;▪ Works with organizations to find applications of academic knowledge (capacity development) for decision making, strategic planning and other processes; and,▪ Supports Kx training efforts.

Position	Main activities
Communication specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees and supports varied knowledge translation services; Develops and maintains the Kx website and plain language summaries; Develops training materials and liaises with UBC departments and programs that provide tools and training for professors and graduate students (CTLT, UBC Studios, etc.); and, Coordinates with UBC Communications and Marketing and other related departments with regards to external and public affairs for institutional campaigns and branding efforts.

Position	Main activities
Front desk / Administrative assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomes visitors to the UBC Knowledge Exchange; Receives and classifies request of Kx support (telephone, email); Supports organizations of events; and, Assists Kx coordinators and Kx brokers with logistics and administrative tasks.

Position	Main activities
Knowledge broker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finds professors and/or graduate students to perform research on a specific topic/problem; Finds external partners that could support ongoing or future research; Reports and maintains communication with the Kx Coordinator; Works with the external stakeholders to reframe knowledge needs into research opportunities, defines roles, functions, and commitments; Studies and remains on top of research agendas, grants and funding mechanisms; Fosters and supports interdisciplinary clusters and key activities; Supports the organization of Kx events; and, Supports Kx training and communication campaigns.

Position	Main activities
Scholarship of Knowledge Exchange Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Researches metrics development in consultation with experts, and Kx brokers;▪ Conducts systematic assessments of reported evidence;▪ Develops protocols for Kx evaluation (big, data, digital opportunities);▪ Liaises with UBC librarians, faculty and researchers on Kx subjects;▪ Coordinates graduate students and post-doctoral researchers to support administrative/research services;▪ Tests accessibility/develops protocols for knowledge translation; and,▪ Works with research proposals oriented to obtain funds for continuous research and development.

***Note: Some positions could be shared with other work streams e.g. business development, during the startup phase.**



There is also clear sentiment across the institution that we can differentiate ourselves from other great universities by committing ourselves as an institution to solving some of the grand challenges that face humanity...



- SANTA ONO
President of UBC

07. Opportunity

One of the main findings of this almost year-long period of research, activities and consultation is an overwhelmingly positive response to the prospect of the UBC Knowledge Exchange. More than simply 'getting prepared' to further research excellence, many professors and staff agree that UBC has an untapped potential for increasing external impact through current and future research. Although UBC's current prestige and renowned position rely on its research excellence throughout the years, there are still many disciplines that could be greatly served by the UBC Knowledge Exchange.

External stakeholders have also expressed interest and excitement to engage broadly with UBC, support shared research efforts, and to provide educational opportunities through reciprocal partnerships.

UBC has a historical opportunity to lead higher institutions across Canada and the world through its support of knowledge exchange. The opportunity to start the UBC Knowledge Exchange will

rapidly position UBC as a leader in knowledge exchange, and at the same time contribute directly to the grand challenge of making academically generated knowledge more accessible, understandable, and relevant to external stakeholders.

The Kx circle also had some ideas for the future of the UBC Knowledge Exchange. Some examples include piloting faculty and staff secondments with external groups, making official days for UBC outreach to particular organizations, new communication modes like 'Research Snaps' from McMaster University, creative implementations of technologies such as IoT and blockchain, and Kx pop-up spaces across the campus.

Finally, the UBC Knowledge Exchange, its programs and innovative mindset will position UBC as a unique, engaged partner that continues to fulfill its responsibility to the public in new inspiring ways for the wider public good.

08. Appendices

1) The Kx Circle Members

* Organized by last name

Name	Last Name	Affiliation
▪ Lerato	Chondoma	VPRI - Indigenous Research Support Network
▪ Keith	Culver	UBC Okanagan Faculty of Management
▪ Michael	Griffin	Department of Philosophy
▪ Paul	Kershaw	SPPH - School of Population and Public Health
▪ Linda	Li	Faculty of Medicine
▪ Karon	MacLean	Department of Computer Science
▪ Nicholas	McGregor	Graduate Student
▪ Stephen	Sheppard	Faculty of Forestry
▪ Michelle	Stack	Faculty of Education
▪ Po On	Yeung	VPRI-Business and Innovation Development

2) Enhancing KMb Participants

STUDIO SESSIONS & INTERVIEWS

* Organized by last name

Name	Last Name	Affiliation
▪ Karen	Bakker	Department of Geography
▪ Jorg	Bohlmann	Michael Smith Labs / Faculty of Science
▪ Janette	Bulkan	Faculty of Forestry
▪ Maxwell	Cameron	Department of Political Science
▪ Patrick	Condon	SALA - School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture
▪ Thomas	Davidoff	Sauder School of Business
▪ Qiang	Fu	Department of Sociology
▪ Benjamin	Goold	Allard School of Law
▪ David	Green	Vancouver School of Economics
▪ Sumeet	Gulati	Faculty of Land and Food Systems
▪ Penny	Gurstein	SCARP - School of Community and Regional Planning
▪ George	Hoberg	UBC School of Public Policy and Global Affairs
▪ Paul	Kershaw	SPPH - School of Population and Public Health
▪ Linc	Kesler	First Nations and Indigenous Studies
▪ Martin	Kirk	ORS - Office of Research Services

(Continuation)

STUDIO SESSIONS & INTERVIEWS

* Organized by last name

Name	Last Name	Affiliation
▪ Peter	Klein	UBC School of Journalism
▪ Nadja	Kunz	UBC School of Public Policy and Global Affairs / Keevil Mining School
▪ Bernadette	Mah	PWAS - Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies
▪ Joanna	Mendell	BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS
▪ Walter	Mérida	Department of Mechanical Engineering
▪ Navin	Ramankutty	UBC School of Public Policy and Global Affairs / IRES Institute of Resources, Environment, and Sustainability
▪ Lindsey	Richardson	Department of Sociology
▪ Maged	Senbel	SCARP - School of Community and Regional Planning
▪ Allen	Sens	Department of Political Science
▪ Stephen	Sheppard	Faculty of Forestry
▪ Sean	Smukler	Faculty of Land and Food Systems
▪ Michelle	Stack	Faculty of Education
▪ Rashid	Sumaila	Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries
▪ James	Vercammen	Faculty of Land and Food Systems
▪ Kelsey	Wrightson	Research Manager / Department of Geography

3) Co-Creating the UBC Kx Participants

List of Internal and External Participants / Stakeholders

* Organized by last name

Name	Last Name	Affiliation
▪ Kelly	Best	BC Province Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology
▪ Joan	Bottorff	UBC Okanagan Nursing
▪ Caitlin	Brownrigg	BC Province Government Digital Experience Division
▪ Bryan	Buggey	Vancouver Economic Commission
▪ Stefanie	Cepeda	BC Province Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology
▪ Genevieve	Creighton	Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research
▪ Keith	Culver	UBC Okanagan Faculty of Management
▪ David	Drohan	BC Province Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology
▪ Jock	Finlayson	Business Council of British Columbia
▪ Prem	Gill	Creative BC
▪ Mark	Holland	Holland Planning
▪ Nancy	Holmes	UBC Okanagan Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies
▪ Julienne	Jagdeo	UBC Postdoctoral fellow
▪ Michael	Johnny	KMb York Unit
▪ John	Krige	Georgia Tech / Visiting professor
▪ Cecile	Lacombe	BC Province Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology
▪ Bruno	Lam	UBC Sauder S3i Impact investing
▪ Conny	Lin	Women in Tech

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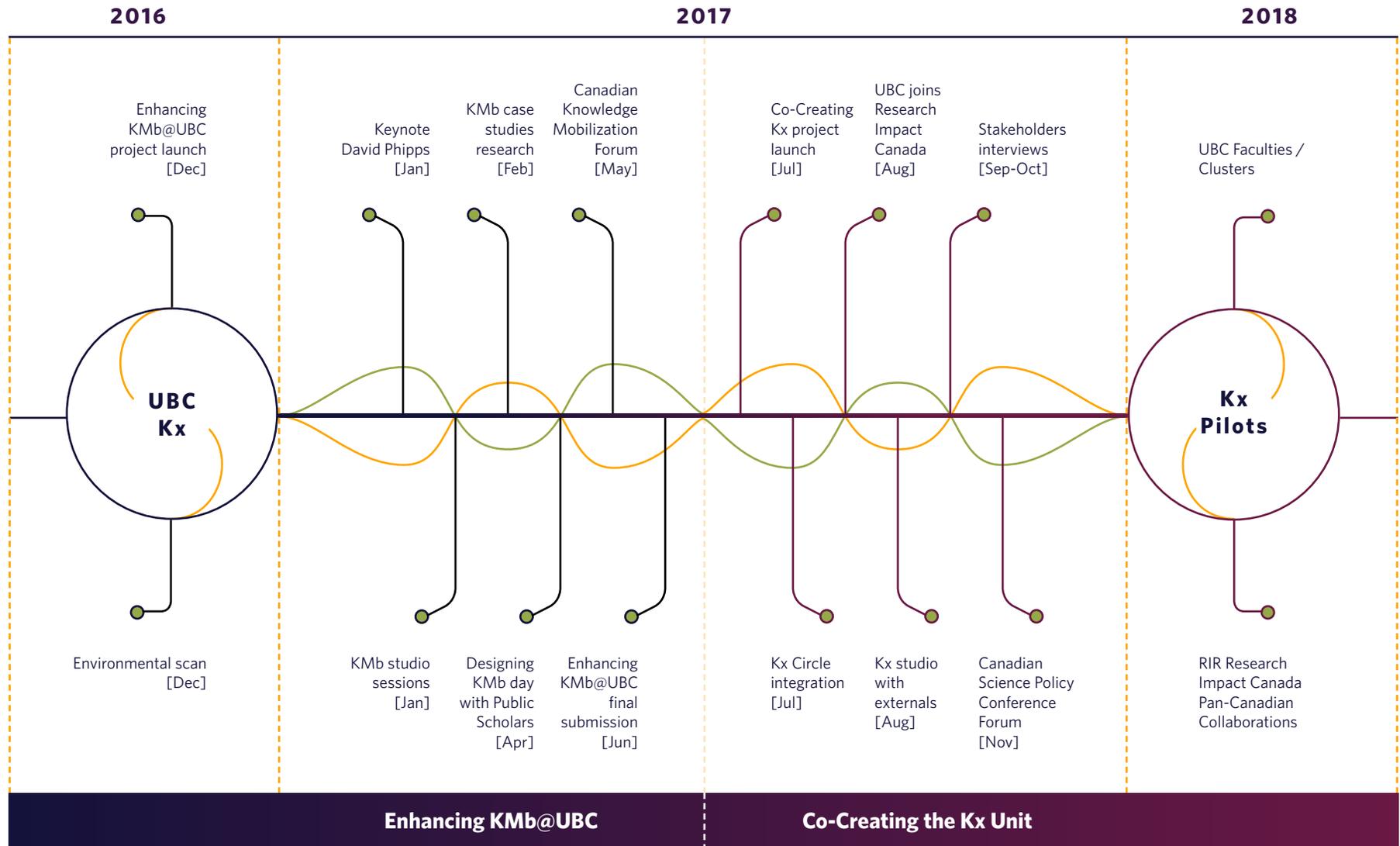
* Organized by last name

Name	Last Name	Affiliation
▪ Bill	MacKenzie	New Brunswick Social Policy Research Network
▪ Karon	MacLean	UBC Computer Science
▪ Colleen	McCormick	BC Province Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology
▪ Rafael	Pacheco	City of Kelowna
▪ David	Phipps	KMb York Unit
▪ Pierre	Rondier	UBC Okanagan Office of Research Services
▪ Gerry	Salembier	Western Economic Diversification
▪ Alan	Shapiro	Water Consultant & Science Communicator
▪ Elizabeth	Sheehan	Climate Smart
▪ Trilby	Smith	Vancouver Foundation
▪ John	Steen	UQ Business School / Visiting Professor
▪ Jennifer	Tedman-Jones	Mitacs Okanagan
▪ Marni	Turek	Okanagan Watershed Management
▪ Anna	Warwick Sears	Okanagan Basin Water Board
▪ Adam	Wei	UBC Okanagan School of Arts and Sciences
▪ Stephanie	Whittaker	Deloitte consulting
▪ Sherry	Zhao	Mitacs Vancouver

4) The Kx Studio Sessions



5) KM/Kx Research Timeline





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