

Should We Join this “Integrated KT” Research Project?

An internal discussion guide for organizations whose primary mandate is not research.

- What is this tool?** A non-exhaustive set of discussion questions to guide decisions about becoming a partner in research projects.
- Who this tool is for?** Service providers, policy departments, community agencies, and other organizations whose primary mandate is not research.
- When to use this tool:** After you have been invited to join a research proposal or research project. This tool can also guide discussions about whether and how to initiate a partnership with a research team. Some of the questions may be helpful in guiding discussions with research partners and research funders during the project negotiation process. You may want to revisit the questions regularly to assess any changes in participants’ needs and capacities to participate in the project.

RELEVANCE:

- Is the project of genuine interest, relevance, and need to both researchers and our organization?
- Has our organization been involved in defining the research topic/question (will time to do this be built into the project)?
- Is there a good fit between the project and our organizational priorities?
- Value-add: Will our organization’s learning/use of research evidence be accelerated because we participated in this project?

THE RESEARCH PARTNERS:

- Have the researchers explained to us why they are interested in the project?
- Do the researchers have a good reputation for working collaboratively?
- Do we have a clear partnership governance agreement with the researchers (will one be developed)?

SUSTAINABILITY:

- Is there organizational-level support for this project (or is it of interest to just one or a few staff members?)
- Do we have a succession plan in place at our organization in case participating staff members are reassigned/leave the project?
- Does our organization have sufficient time and resources to dedicate to the project? Will the organization be compensated for some/all/or no project-related expenses?

CAPACITY ISSUES:

- Do the researchers understand our context sufficiently well to be full partners on this project (can they be brought up to speed)?
- Does our staff understand the research approach sufficiently well to be full partners on this project (can they be brought up to speed)?
- Does the project offer opportunities for capacity building in areas that are important to us and to the researchers?

What is “Integrated KT”?

From the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.
<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/39033.html>

In “integrated knowledge translation (KT)”, stakeholders or potential research knowledge users are engaged in the entire research process. By doing integrated KT, researchers and research users work together to shape the research process by collaborating to determine the research questions, deciding on the methodology, being involved in data collection and tools development, interpreting the findings, and helping disseminate the research results. This approach, also known by such terms as collaborative research, action-oriented research, and co-production of knowledge, should produce research findings that are more likely to be relevant to and used by the end users.