FOSTERING RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS AT THE GRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE LEVELS

UBC Knowledge Exchange Unit
Vice-President, Research and Innovation Office

Point Grey Campus
xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Traditional Territory
A NOTE OF THANKS

This workshop was presented by the UBC Knowledge Exchange Unit (Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation) with support from the Public Scholars Initiative, the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, and the Government of Canada’s Future Skills Centre.

This material was developed by the UBC Knowledge Exchange Unit within the Vice-President, Research and Innovation Office at the University of British Columbia. When circulating these materials, please cite our organization.
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<td>Act 1 – Coming to the Table</td>
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WHO WE ARE – KX WITHIN INNOVATION UBC

Impacts
- Economic
- Social
- Political
- Environmental
- Cultural

UBC research & scholarship

Commercialization
Entrepreneurship
Innovation Partnerships
Knowledge Exchange

Innovation UBC
WHO WE ARE – KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE UNIT

Vision
UBC’s hub for mobilizing research into policy, practice, public dialogue, and culture for the benefit of communities in BC, Canada and around the world.

Mission
Foster a supportive culture of Kx and support UBC researchers in establishing meaningful collaborations and communicating knowledge effectively and ethically with communities, government agencies, and non-profit organizations for greater impact.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Identify goals and challenges for a range of collaborators, partners, and stakeholders
2. Develop open-ended questions to begin an open dialogue with partners, collaborators, and stakeholders
3. Situate partners, collaborators, and stakeholders within a pathway to positive change
HIGHWAY TO... AUTHENTIC RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS AND POLICY CHANGE

the journey of an early-career scholar

OMAR SWEI, PHD
Dr. Omar Swei

- **MIT**
  - PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering
- **Fulbright**
  - US Fulbright Scholar in Amman, Jordan
- **MIT**
  - Postdoctoral Research Fellow
- **UBC**
  - Assistant Professor, Department of Civil Engineering
  - Academic Advisor, Project and Construction Management
THE FUTURE IS UNKNOWN – YOU CAN IMPROVE PERFORMANCE BY BEING ABLE TO ADAPT

“‘Be careful’! All you can tell me is ‘Be careful’?”
The general goal of our research has been to create tools that:

- Considers many uncertainties
- Generates high performing, adaptable plans
- Significantly reduces costs and impacts
SINCE JOINING UBC, THE SCOPE OF THIS RESEARCH HAS EXPANDED... HOW?

Our bread & butter

Sewage-sludge technologies

Infrastructure Policy and Productivity
PHD: ENHANCING MY ADVISOR’S EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

Significant Support and Engagements with Trade Associations and DOTs
PHD LESSON: CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION VIA MULTIPLE CHANNELS IS IMPORTANT

2-3 webinars per year with each stakeholder

Research Briefs – 1 Pagers

White Papers
PHD LESSON: PURSUE RESEARCH THAT follows THE AGENDA OF THE PARTNER ORGANIZATION

GHG emissions across network

Improve infrastructure cost planning

User impacts of maintenance activities
PHD LESSON: ENGAGE WITH INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMUNITIES IN YOUR FIELD
FULBRIGHT LESSON: PARTNERSHIPS REQUIRE MORE PLANNING THAN YOU’D THINK

- June 2015 – Engage with partner organization in Amman
- October 2015 – Proposal submitted
- April 2016 – Proposal awarded
- September 2016 – Arrive in Jordan
- October 2016 – Begin data collection

Amman, Jordan
FACULTY LESSONS: IF YOU DO WELL, GOOD PARTNERSHIPS WILL COME ABOUT NATURALLY

• Fascination with productivity and its effects
• Low productivity growth impacts wage growth, costs, and firm competitiveness

Fascination with productivity and its effects
Low productivity growth impacts wage growth, costs, and firm competitiveness

BROOKINGS

Long-Run Construction Cost Trends: Baumol’s Cost Disease and a Disaggregate Look at Building Material Price Dynamics

Omar Swel, Ph.D.
FACULTY LESSONS: PARTNERSHIPS CAN BE DEVELOPED BY REACHING OUT AND LISTENING

Including both non-academic and academic partners (e.g., Metro Vancouver project)
COMING TO THE TABLE
COMING TO THE TABLE

learning objectives:
• identify goals and challenges for a range of collaborators, partners, and stakeholders
• develop generative questions
Commitment Issues

Why I say no to a research project?
1. Expecting something for nothing
2. One-sided engagement
3. Tokenism
4. False assumptions

How to get me to yes?
1. Arrive early and get to know me and my organization
2. Listen carefully
3. Speak the same language
4. Be relevant
5. Bring value
6. Be respectful

EMPATHY

The ability to understand and share the feelings perspective of another.
HOW TO PRACTICE EMPATHY

• Leverage your intellectual curiosity
• Ask generative questions
• Seek to understand alternative methods, frameworks, and objectives
COMING TO THE TABLE (ACTIVITY 1)

Scenario: A researcher has invited a group of potential partners, collaborators, and stakeholders to discuss an idea for a new school lunch program at Innovation Elementary School. While the group agrees that healthier lunches are a good idea in principle, each group member has competing priorities and constraints.

What questions will lay the groundwork for collaboration?
ALIGNING PROTOCOLS, EXPECTATIONS & PROCESSES

Learning objective:
• situate partners, collaborators, and stakeholders within a pathway to positive change
THE WHAT AND WHY OF INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION (IKT)

• Integrated knowledge translation (IKT) involves engaging and integrating those who will need to act on the findings, the knowledge users, into the research process.

• iKT requires researchers and research users to develop partnerships and engage in a collaborative process with the overarching goal being the co-production of knowledge, its exchange and its translation into action.

• By integrating knowledge users at every stage, KT becomes woven into the process and researchers minimise the possibilities of unanticipated barriers that may occur when attempting to act upon results with stakeholders.
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Developing a Partnership Agreement

Expectations & Roles

Your partnership agreement may include:

1. The research project’s objectives and goals
2. How work will be divided between the various partners
3. The structure of the project’s shared governance and methods for joint decision making
4. Roles of each of the partners (rights and responsibilities)
5. Mechanisms for conflict resolution
6. Ongoing evaluation of the partnership process
7. How will authorship of publications be considered?
The Knowledge to Action Model

SITUATE PARTNERS, COLLABORATORS, AND STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN A PATHWAY TO POSITIVE CHANGE (ACTIVITY 2)

As a group, discuss where in the knowledge to action cycle each persona’s expertise would be especially valuable.
PANEL: INSIGHTS FROM PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
Panelists

[PROVIDE NAMES, TITLES, AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THREE PANELISTS REPRESENTING PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS]
QUESTION 1

What does a successful partnership between your organization and a researcher look like?
QUESTION 2

What makes a great (or less than great) first conversation with a researcher about a potential partnership?
QUESTION 3

What are some common factors that affect your organization’s timeline and ability to commit to a research partnership?
OPEN Q&A