



## 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

Fredericton, N.B., Oct. 18, 2011

Rob Greenwood, Ph.D.  
Director



## Overview

- Harris Centre Overview
- Knowledge Mobilization
- Programs & Initiatives
- [www.yaffle.ca](http://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  
Economic Development  
Board**

Requests Graduate Student  
research related to Leading  
Tickles MPA



## Responding to the Community: Example

Leading Tickles Marine Protected Area (MPA)

Exploits Valley Regional  
Economic Development  
Board  
Requests Graduate Student  
research related to Leading  
Tickles MPA



**Harris Centre circulates  
“one pager” on opportunity**

**Biology faculty member  
responds**



## Responding to the Community: Example

Leading Tickles Marine Protected Area (MPA)

Exploits Valley Regional Economic Development Board

Requests Graduate Student research related to Leading Tickles MPA



Harris Centre circulates "one pager" on opportunity

Biology faculty member responds

Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) presents MPA needs

Faculty / graduate student work on proposals



## Responding to the Community: Example

Leading Tickles Marine Protected Area (MPA)

Exploits Valley Regional Economic Development Board

Requests Graduate Student research related to Leading Tickles MPA



Harris Centre circulates "one pager" on opportunity

Biology faculty member responds



Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) presents MPA needs

Faculty / graduate student work on proposals

Three proposals presented to DFO

DFO funds faculty / graduate student research (capelin, lobster, herring)



## Responding to the Community: Example

Leading Tickles Marine Protected Area (MPA)

**Exploits Valley Regional Economic Development Board**

Requests Graduate Student research related to Leading Tickles MPA

Harris Centre circulates "one pager" on opportunity

Biology faculty member responds

Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) presents MPA needs

Faculty / graduate student work on proposals

Three proposals presented to DFO

DFO funds faculty / graduate student research (capelin, lobster, herring)

### Harris Centre brokers long-term relationship

DFO - Memorial collaborative research agreement on MPA's



## Responding to the Community: Example

Leading Tickles Marine Protected Area (MPA)

**Exploits Valley Regional Economic Development Board**

Requests Graduate Student research related to Leading Tickles MPA

Harris Centre circulates "one pager" on opportunity

Biology faculty member responds

Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) presents MPA needs

Faculty / graduate student work on proposals

Three proposals presented to DFO

DFO funds faculty / graduate student research (capelin, lobster, herring)

Harris Centre brokers long-term relationship

DFO - Memorial collaborative research agreement on MPA's

The results

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

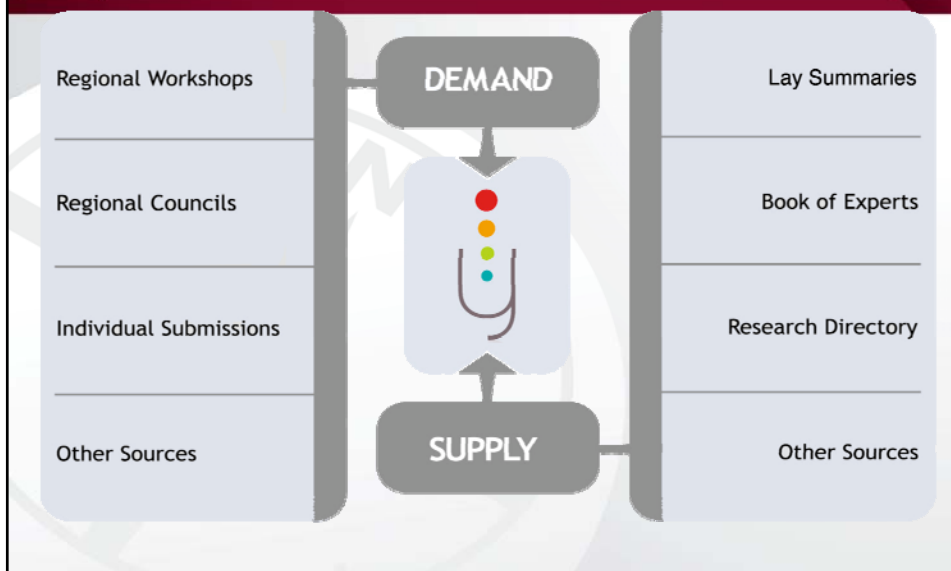


## One-pager Successes

- 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



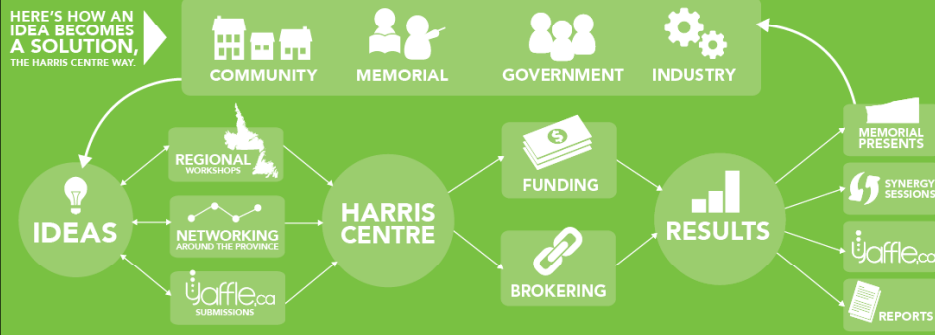
- 1550+ Lay Summaries
- 150+ Opportunities
- 900+ Researcher and Staff Expertise Profiles
- University of Alberta interest in adopting Yaffle; discussions under way
- Extension of Yaffle outside Memorial to research and knowledge mobilization partners within NL







## 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?!*