

## 2009 International Campbell Collaboration (C2) Colloquium

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### Abstract Information

**Abstract Title:**

Supporting researchers in their knowledge transfer activities: The role of universities

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**Abstract:**

There is a rapidly growing trend to use research-based knowledge (RBK) to influence both practice and policy. The trend is especially noticeable in fields that deal with social issues such as health, social services, education, and justice; increasingly, decisions and judgement must be based on scientific evidence. Over the last few decades, this trend has been expressed by various new approaches: knowledge transfer (KT), evidence-based decision making, evidence-based practices, knowledge translation, knowledge mobilization, knowledge exchange, etc. Many rigorous studies have shown that simply disseminating knowledge, even if that knowledge is extremely convincing, has relatively little impact on knowledge use (see for example: Barker, 2005; Bowen & Martens, 2005). In order to make research results accessible to fields of intervention, the context of these fields must be taken into consideration and results must be presented in an appropriate format for the targeted audience (Dagenais, 2006; Hughes et al., 2000). Margolis and Runyan (1998), however, report that researchers consider they do not possess the necessary competencies, resources, time, or interest for transforming their research results into guidelines that could be directly used by practitioners and decision-makers. In their opinion, the task of popularizing research findings is not part of a researcher's mandate (Rotheram-Borus et al., 2000). Information about the particular needs of researchers for support in carrying out knowledge transfer activities is almost non-existent. The study presented in this proposal aims to address this issue. A need is defined as the gap between the present situation (what is) and the desired situation (what should be) (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995; Kaufman, 1998; Leigh, 2004). A need is not a problem (a state or phenomenon considered undesirable), but rather the absence of a solution to a problem. The methodology proposed in this needs assessment is inspired by Leigh's model (2004) and consists of four main phases. Its goal is to achieve four objectives: 1) document the attitudes of researchers to knowledge transfer; 2) describe the practices of researchers with respect to research transfer; 3) identify the factors that facilitate or inhibit research transfer activities for researchers; 4) identify the principal needs of researchers for support of their research transfer activities. The presentation will emphasize the priority needs identified by the study and the action plan developed to meet these needs.

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