

LEISURE INFORMATION NETWORK

Annual Report 2017

Knowledge Development & Management: A Sectoral Opportunity

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



It is with very mixed emotions that I present this report. Pride in our stewardship of the National Recreation Database. Disappointment that we can no longer fund the provision of this valuable resource. Gratitude to those who supported and worked for LIN over the years. Recognition that change in how knowledge development & management supports the sector is needed.

Most of all, I know that knowledge sharing remains as essential to the success of our national recreation sector as it was when LIN began in 1995. LIN's offices will close this fall, but our commitment to knowledge development & management in the sector remains as strong as ever. This report will serve as the first step in what will hopefully be a new direction towards a vibrant and sustainable national recreation sector through knowledge development & management.

We hope you will join us on this journey.

Gabi Haas

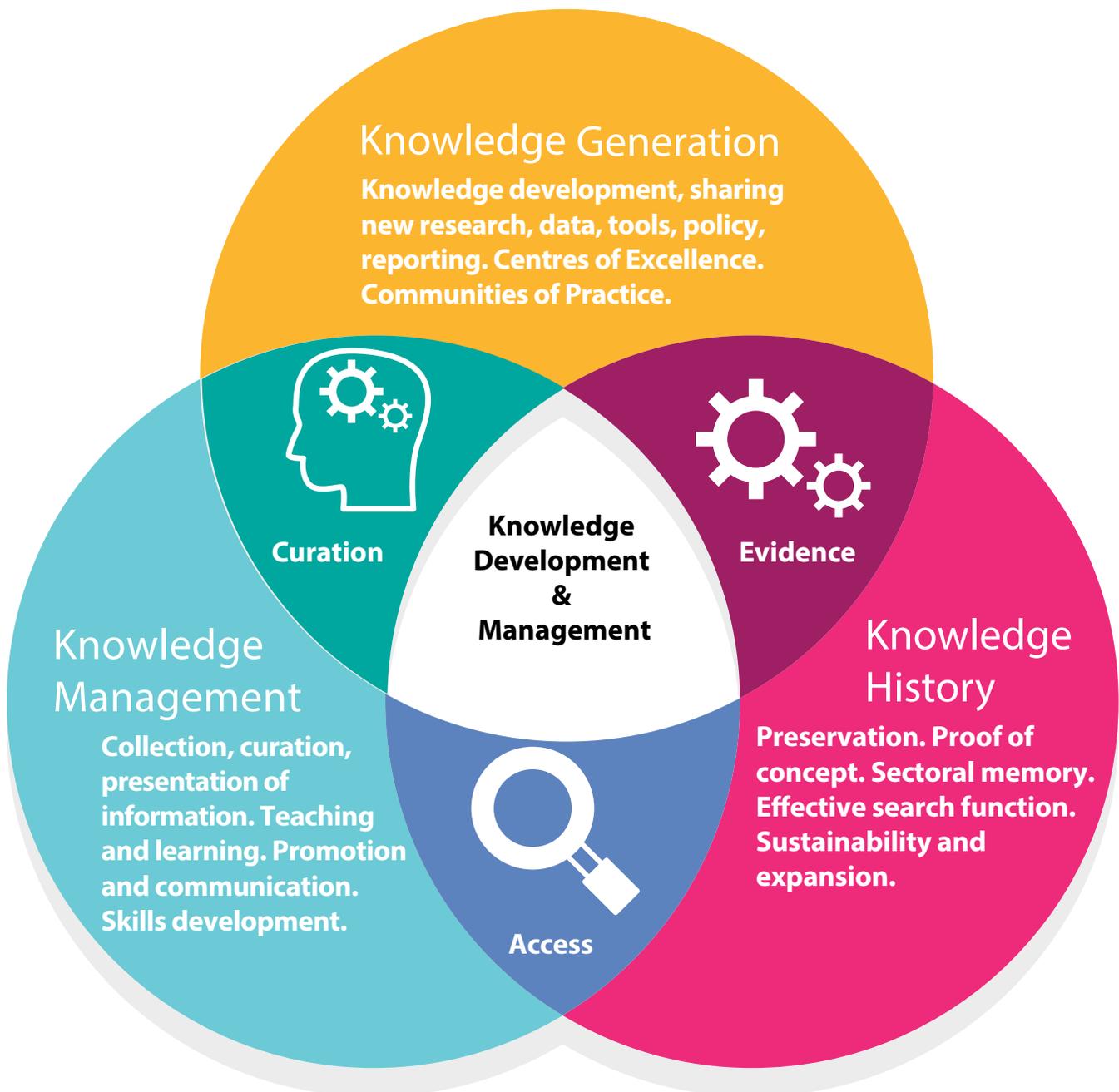
Chair, Leisure Information Network

“THE VISIONARY
STARTS WITH
A CLEAN SHEET
OF PAPER, AND
RE-IMAGINES
THE WORLD”
-MALCOLM GLADWELL

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT?

Knowledge development & management is the symbiotic process of preserving historical knowledge, and curating and sharing information to support our immediate national recreation sector goals, to allow for the creation of new knowledge and insight that will direct how the sector evolves into the future.

It is in our communal interest to be intentional, collaborative and innovative in defining how knowledge development & management will work in our sector.



WHAT WE KNOW

From our 20+ years of supporting knowledge development & management we know:

Practitioners are looking for reputable, relevant information.

LIN sees over 100,000 visits annually from front-line workers, academics and students, senior managers and government staff. There is a strong appetite within stakeholders in the sector to share knowledge and experiences with each other.

Challenges in the sector are becoming more complex and new issues are emerging at a more rapid pace.

More than ever, easy access to the larger brain trust is necessary as organizations grapple with emerging issues that require quick action and solid implementation.

Knowledge development & management requires committed collaboration and sustaining resources.

Knowledge development & management is dependent on partnership. Information must be accessible where it lives and breathes and not relegated to repositories, which are cumbersome to maintain and prone to irrelevancy over time. There must be space for many voices, including those outside of traditional recreation and parks organizations. Collaboration must extend to the sustainability of information solutions. When our sharing agreements are ineffective, data quality erodes. When knowledge development & management strategies are not strategically financed, they do not last.

National dialogue is crucial.

In a sector so easily siloed by municipal or provincial pressures, a national conversation is easily lost. We cannot be truly innovative and responsive to the needs of Canadians if we do not engage with practitioners across the country to explore and find effective solutions to common problems, and to determine unique approaches through awareness of different practices.

A new approach is needed.

The sector must look beyond the traditional municipal recreation model and embrace greater input from the academic, and private and public sector organizations committed to enriching the lives of Canadians.

WHAT KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT OFFERS THE SECTOR

A thoughtful and defined knowledge development & management strategy will offer the national recreation sector numerous benefits.

This strategy is one that should encompass and promote the goals and ideals of the sector's guiding documents: A Framework for Recreation in Canada; Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada: Let's Get Moving; Active Canada 20/20; Canadian Sport Policy; Connecting Canadians with Nature; The Declaration on Prevention and Promotion; Healthy Aging in Canada: A New Vision; IndigenACTION, et al.



Collaborate

NATIONAL DIALOGUE

Knowledge development & management should encourage a national discussion that brings together unique regional perspectives but also works towards common goals (National Recreation Framework), answers common questions and supports excellence in program planning and delivery across the country.



Target

CURATED CONTENT

Knowledge development should support the presentation of authoritative, relevant and accurate data related to the sector. Information should be robust, but thoughtfully curated and presented in ways to support practitioners in finding what they need.



Educate

SHARED KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge development & management should support not only self-searching and retrieval but actively work to inform and educate the sector. The creation of research portals, learning tools, best practices and other teaching mechanisms should be a priority.



Grow

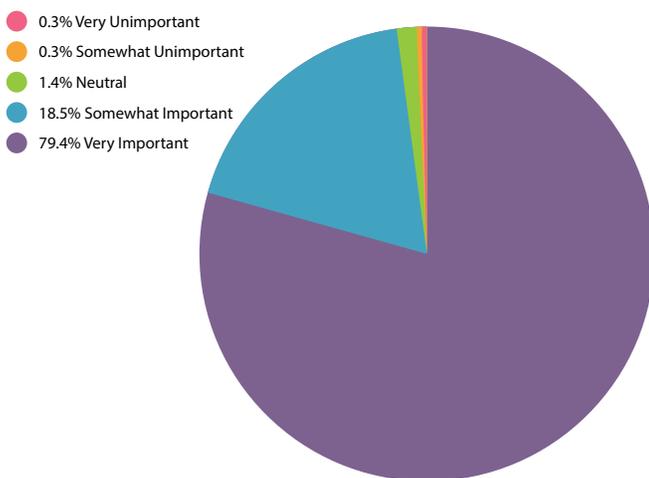
SUPPORTED AND SUSTAINED

Knowledge development & management should be a priority for all sector partners and be considered in budget planning, seeking out project funding and sponsorship requests to ensure information and research continue to drive policy creation, program planning, and other key decision making.

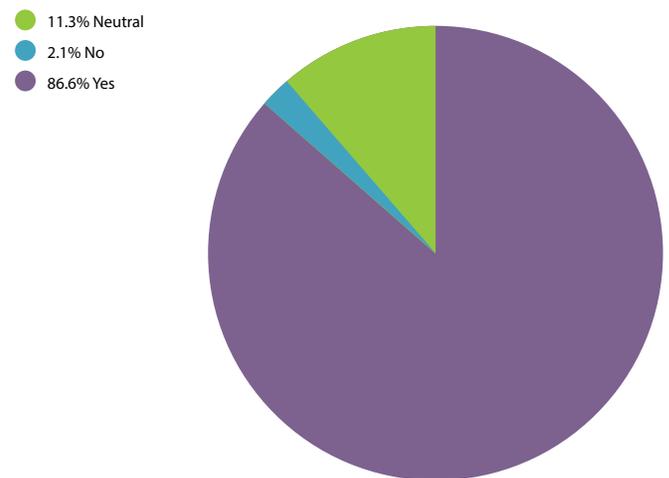
WHAT WE LEARNED

LIN conducted a survey* in the summer of 2017 to ask national recreation sector practitioners how they use information in their work and what they wanted from Knowledge Development & Management in the sector. Here is what the sector had to say.

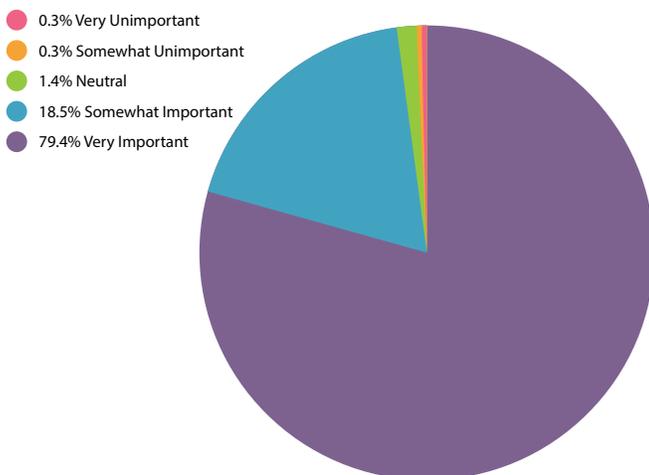
What Importance do you place on staying up to date with the latest trends and information?



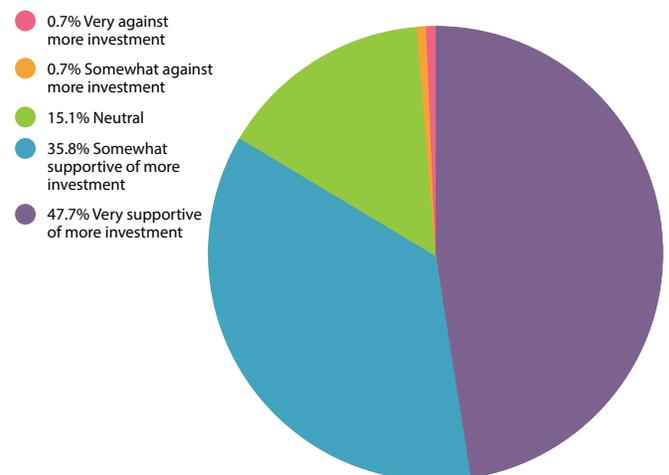
Do you support greater unification of knowledge management within the sector combining sport, fitness, parks, recreation, leisure, arts, culture, tourism information in one digital (web-based) place?



Do you value the ability to share information with and from other regions in Canada?



What degree of support would you have for more investment in research, trends analysis, benchmark information to support your work?



HOW THE SECTOR CAN SUPPORT KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

We have a great need for a strong and sustainable knowledge development & management strategy to support stakeholder-driven information sharing. The good news is that we already have many of the tools we need at our disposal to build a world-class knowledge development & management strategy, and a willingness from the sector to support that strategy.

"Grey" Literature

- Legislation
- Policies: HR, Privacy, Health, Codes of conduct
- Procedures: Manuals, RFPs, Hiring

Professional Development

- Online training
- Best practices
Certifications
- Conferences/Forums
- Evaluation & Measurement

Targeted Content

- Audience based: Seniors, Newcomers, Girls, LGBTQ Community, Indigenous Peoples
- Topic based: Master Plans, Certification, Planning and Evaluation, Accessibility, Climate Change
- Region based: P/T Specific, Rural, Urban



Communications/Promotion

- News updates
- Collaborative events
- Marketing and promotion support
- Engagement/feedback loops
- Sector outreach
- Public Outreach

Open Data

- Infrastructure data
- Granting data
- Population data
- User data
- Salary data

Research

- The Benefits Hub
- Conference papers
- White papers
- Student showcase
- Policy Institute
- Trend Tracking

What we need now are the blueprints to build and support a new strategy for knowledge development & management that looks beyond our traditional partnerships to create a broader and more diverse network of support for excellence in the sector.

WHAT SUPPORTS KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT IN THE SECTOR?

There are multiple partnerships that can be fostered and enhanced to support knowledge development & management in the sector. Our first step is to define and solidify these partnerships to ensure the right people are at the table to map the future of information sharing in Canada.



WHERE WE NEED TO GO: A NEW VISION

Canada is a complex country with multiple layers of government, a wide and varied geography and a diverse population with unique recreation and leisure needs that must be reflected in policy development and program delivery.

A thriving national recreation sector that meets the needs of all Canadians cannot be achieved if our organizations are siloed without common spaces to share best practices, policy initiatives, challenges and ideas for the future.

How will we address changing and aging populations? Truth and reconciliation? Climate and environmental issues? Privacy and safety? The complexity of our sector requires a shared solution built on partnerships and collaborative initiatives, not undertaken in an ad-hoc manner, but as part of a national action plan that takes into consideration all of the existing guiding documents and principles currently at play in the sector, and with an eye towards those that will come next.



LEARN

- Learning opportunities on topics of interest: Webinars, presentations, toolkits, guides
- Opportunities to connect in person: Forums, conferences, symposiums
- Opportunities to mentor and share best practices: Presentations, reports, surveys
- Measurement tools to create benchmarks and assess progress
- Support to enhance digital literacy for practitioners

THINK

- Feedback mechanisms to determine current and future information needs
- Consultation mechanisms for planning and evaluation that engage all sector partners
- Alignment with F/P/T government priorities

INFORM

- Common spaces for asking questions and sharing new developments
- Updates on National Recreation Framework process and communications from the ISRC
- Updates on latest news/events/research
- Update/expand recreation glossary of terms

EDUCATE

- Shared recreation curriculum for students in Leisure Studies and Recreation courses
- Academic Centres of Excellence
- Research web portal
- Practitioner access to research in leisure studies

EXPLORE

- Engage with partners in, and beyond, the sector to identify Communities of Practice and spaces where recreation exists outside of traditional organizations
- Expand information sharing to support the full recreation/leisure spectrum (Parks/Arts/etc.)

FIND

- Common space to begin navigating all the recreation information that exists
- Tailored information spaces for specific audiences
- Space to connect with the open data being made available for research/measurement
- Continued access to the 25K+ documents in the National Recreation Database
- Easy search mechanisms for finding the data practitioners need

HOW WILL WE GET THERE?: A CALL TO ACTION

Who is responsible for knowledge development & management? Everyone has a role to play in ensuring knowledge development & management in the national recreation sector can grow and thrive:

- **Practitioners and leisure professionals must buy in to knowledge development & management, participate in all aspects of the strategy and commit time and resources to it**
- **Government must support and coordinate knowledge development & management at the provincial and federal levels**
- **The academic community must work with practitioners to ensure research is available and contextual for those putting new ideas into practice**
- **The private sector must be encouraged to share ideas and resources in moving this conversation forward**
- **Allies in adjacent sectors must be identified and engaged to ensure the benefits of recreation are available to all Canadians, and to open up new ways of thinking and doing within the sector.**

Now is the time for the sector to come together to debate these questions and to find the answers that will contribute to a well-informed, collaborative national recreation sector and a healthier, happier and more resilient Canada.

Want to play a role in the creation of a new national knowledge development and management strategy for the sector? Contact Gabi Haas, Chair, Leisure Information Network for more information: ghaas@gdhsolutions.com