

Active Intermediaries for Knowledge Exchange

Professor Tim May, Director SURF Centre
Dr Beth Perry, SURF-Mistra Urban Futures Research Fellow

SURF Centre
University of Salford Manchester

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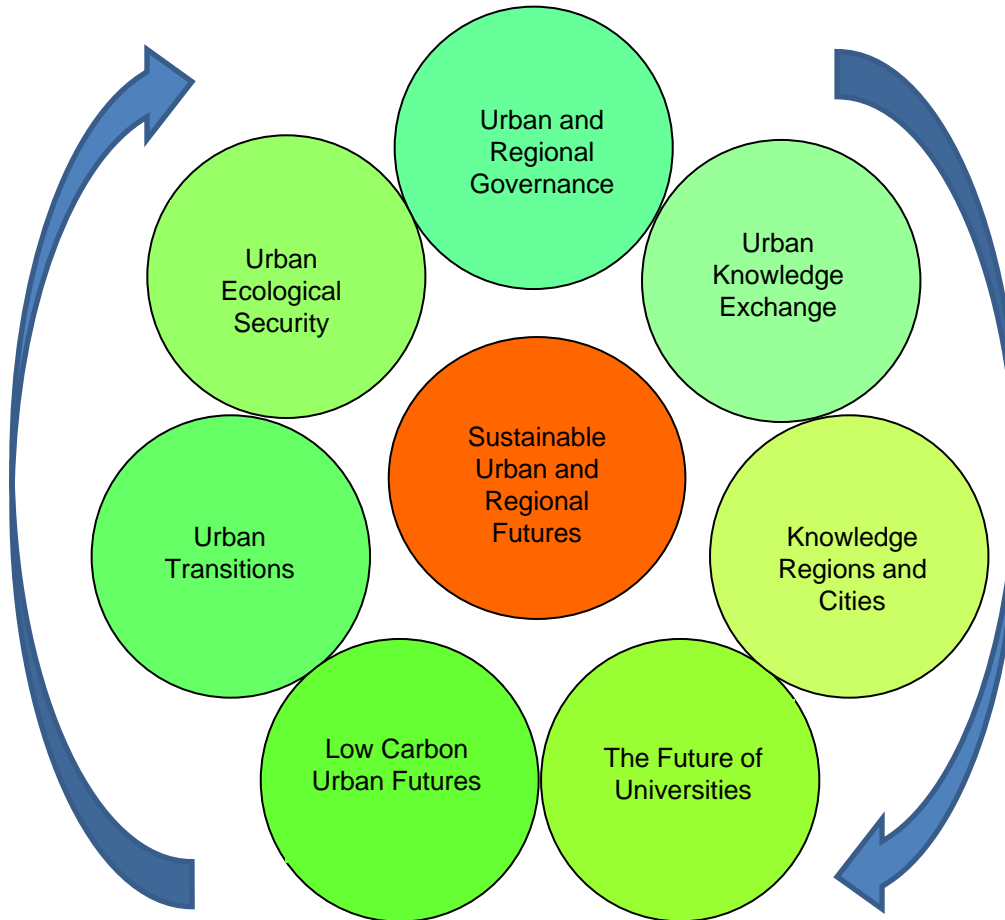


About SURF

- Interdisciplinary research centre at University of Salford Manchester, 6* rated SOBE
- Established 2000, funding from Peel Holdings and United Utilities
- Mixed funding regime – academic, policy, business and third sector
- Commitment to research *excellence* and societal *relevance* at global and local scales



Our Work



- Building Science and Innovation Regions (ESRC, BCC, Northern Way)
- Knowledge Cities (Science Cities, NESTA/NWDA/MCC)
- Roles of Universities (Contact Partnership, GMUKA and MKC)
- **Knowledge Exchange (Trent WDC; NHSI; ESRC (Impact and Network), COST Action, GONW, ARUP)**
- City-Regional Thinking (Framework for City-Regions; Whitehall Placement; ERAs; New Horizons)
- Sustainable Urban Development - UKAs/Urban Transitions (Mistra Urban Futures and EPSRC)

Context

The Knowledge Economy

Global Drivers

- Knowledge as core to wealth creation
- High value-added, high skill economy
- Emphasis on science, economic development and competitiveness
- Universities as the new 'knowledge factories'

UK Policy Responses

- Innovation as key driver of productivity
- DTI 1998 Building the Knowledge Driven Economy
- Knowledge transfer as key, including in NHS
- Dearing, HEROBC and HEIF

'Glocalisation'

Global Drivers

- Globalisation and 'death of distance'
- Emphasis on regions and localities
- Economic and political dimension

UK Policy Responses

- Devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Levelling up between the regions
- New forms of governance and partnership (city-regions; Northern Way)
- Focus on NHS as a regional actor e.g Investment for Health (East Midlands PHS)

State Intervention

Global Drivers

- Withdrawal of the state
- Movement towards new forms of public management
- Role for private sector
- New regulatory frameworks

UK Policy Response

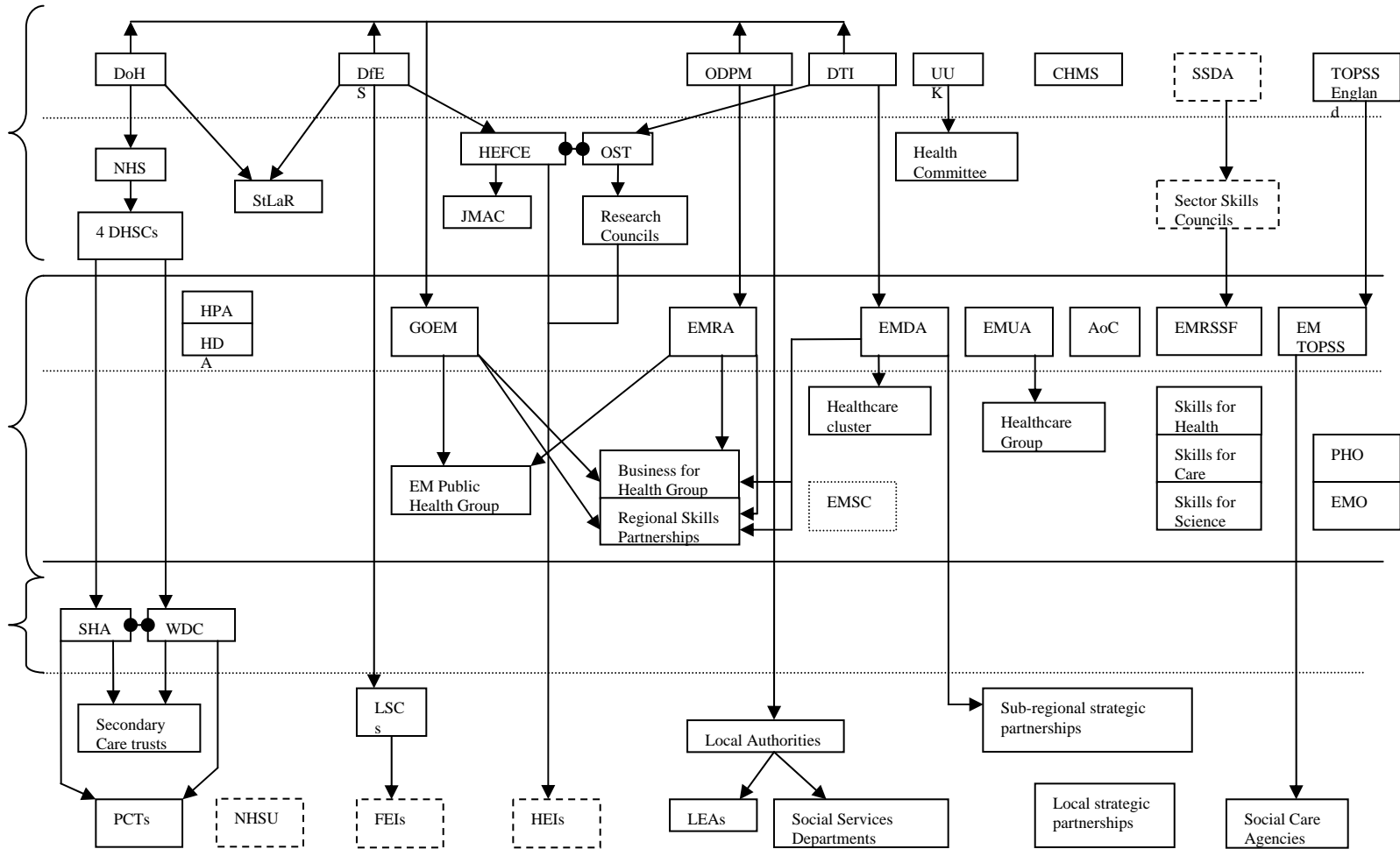
- New partnerships with the private sector across policy areas
- Reorganisation of public services
- NHS and HEI reform: HESPs
- Tools for accountability, efficiency, auditing and performance measurement

Starting Points

• Strategic Learning and Research Advisory Group + Health and Education Strategic Partnerships

Phase	Aims	Activities	Outputs
Aug to Sep 2003	A 'thinking piece' to flesh out key issues in assisting the HESP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face • Telephone interviews • Desk-based research 	Report: "Making The HESP Work in Trent"
Jan to June 2004	To understand the context and challenges facing the HESP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further interviews • Secondary documentation • Questionnaire • Initial comparative and national interviews 	Presentation to HESP Summit; Background Report; HESP Summit Summary
July 2004 - Nov 2006	To improve understanding of the research – practice relationship in health and social care to underpin the work of the HESP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review • Policy analysis • Case Studies (bioscience/genomics, health services, public health, social care) with interviews 	Research report

Geographies of Health and Social Care





Implications for Knowledge Exchange

- Multiple partners, interests and agendas
 - Varied interpretations of knowledge exchange (or transfer)
 - Different understandings of geography
 - Constant organisational change
- = A missing middle: how to deliver, with what capacities and by whom?



Box 1:
Knowledge and its Exchange

Traditional Mode - Transfer	Emerging Mode - Exchange
Knowledge is driven by individual and professional interests	Problems are defined and set jointly by stakeholders
Knowledge is produced by academics and then transferred in a linear process to 'users'	Knowledge is co-produced with continuous and interactive relationships between producers and funders and users
Knowledge tends to be codified	Knowledge is communicated and it is recognised also to be tacit, embedded and embodied
Dominant methods of knowledge transfer tends to include report writing, articles, etc	Varied mechanisms for knowledge transfer which include presentations, seminars, placements, job-sharing, workshops, multi-media etc
Knowledge provides information to funders and users that can be stored, retrieved and referred to	Knowledge is stored but is retrieved according to intelligence that is then incorporated into organisational cultures and practices
Knowledge transfer is passive, contained and static	Knowledge transfer is active, fluid and dynamic
<p>Knowledge Production</p>  <p>Knowledge Transfer</p> <p>Knowledge Use</p>	<p>Knowledge Production</p>  <p>Knowledge Use</p> <p>Knowledge Transfer</p> <p>Knowledge Reception</p>

Source: SURF, drawing on Gibbons et al 1994 'The New Production of Knowledge'



Interviewee Reflections

- Volume and source of funding
- Conflicting expectations on staff and personnel
- Staff recruitment, retention and skills
- Institutional support and divisions of labour
- Infrastructure enabling development
- Capacity building
- Different research methodologies used
- Issues of scale in knowledge production
- Degrees of partnership and collaboration
- Embeddedness of organisational learning



Disciplinary Differences

	Bioscience/genomics	Social Care
Funding amounts	Large	Smaller
Funders of research	Research Councils, RAE and large medical charities / organisations	Research Councils and Voluntary sector, but also regional and local agencies and felt not to be 'RAEable'
Nature of work	Tendency to long-term research projects in established areas	Shorter work, including consultancies, tending to take place in embryonic research fields
Location of study	Laboratory-based	Institutional, but also social settings and organisations
Preferred methodologies	Experiment and Design	Quantitative and Qualitative
Favoured methods of KT	Writing in peer-reviewed journals; reports	Reports as well as journal articles
Relevance to...	The 'general' health of the population	'Specific' communities and groups
Users of research	Tendency to less direct contact with users	Contact through methodologies deployed (interviews, focus groups) and management of research (steering groups)

Context-Sensitive Knowledge Exchange

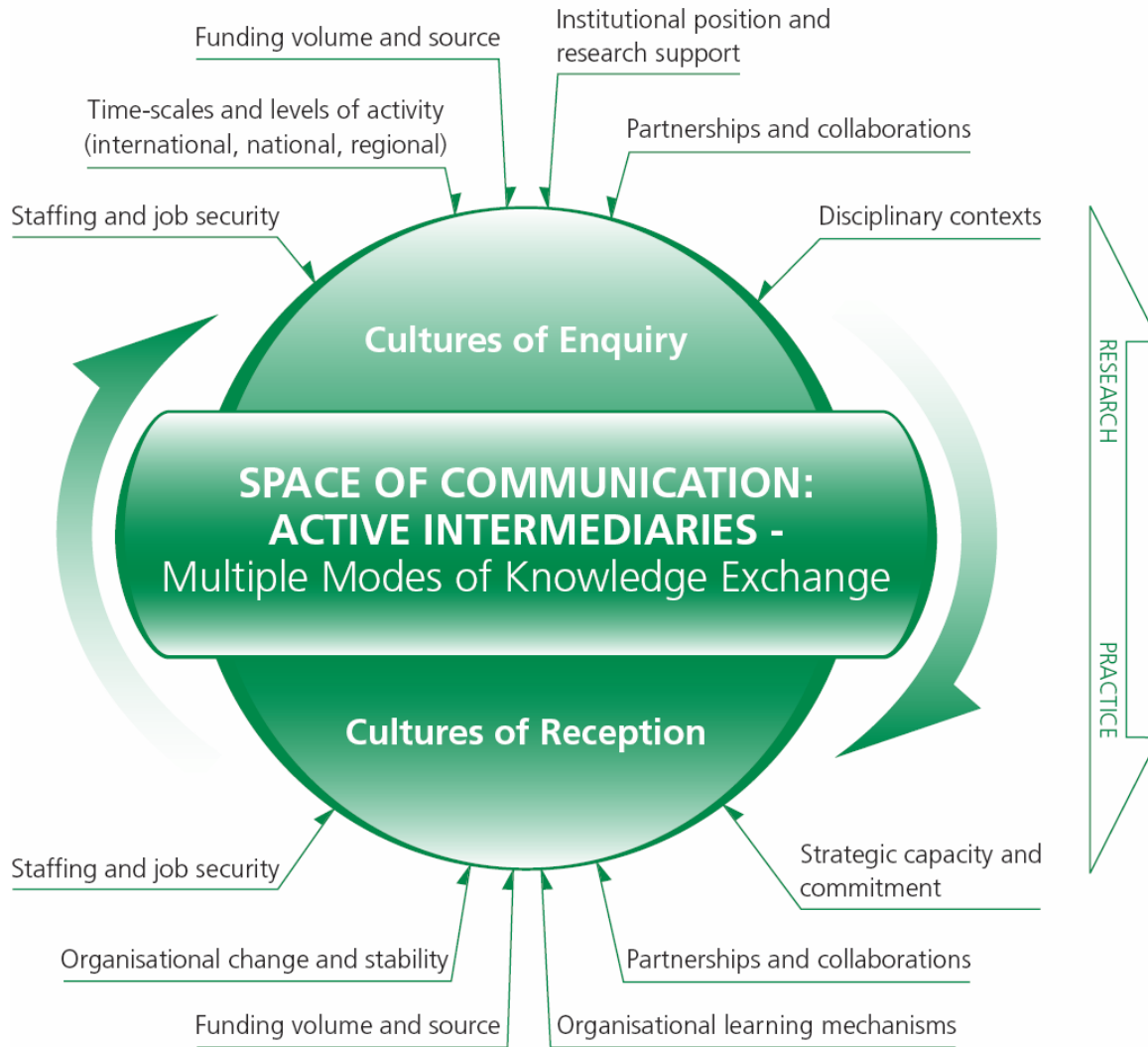
There is no single model or one-size-fits all solution

A sensitivity to disciplinary, organisational, sectoral and spatial contexts matters

This requires understanding cultures of knowledge production and knowledge reception...



Figure 1:
A Context-Sensitive Framework For Knowledge Exchange



The Role of an Active Intermediary

- > Map existing work in different institutions in terms of types of research and involvement of different personnel.
- > Act as a bridge between organisations, identifying gaps and strengths.
- > Act as a broker and advisor deploying the personnel from different organisations who understand the desired outcomes, but also the contexts in which personnel work.
- > Take the need for staff mobility seriously in order to provide the necessary human resource for success. That means understanding and even challenging particular institutional incentives and career structures.
- > Translate and disseminate the results of work according to the needs of different groups.
- > Provide an integrative function to ensure that existing disparate information can be combined and re-used for creating intelligence.
- > Provide knowledge arenas for different groups to understand, discuss and exchange ideas without concern for immediate consequence.
- > Provide a resource for identifying research funding opportunities and submissions and add value by making connections between different funding streams.
- > Bring together otherwise disparate groups to work collaboratively for collective benefit within new partnerships by understanding the ways in which existing organisations work.
- > Act, in partnership, as a resource for people in their daily practices and distinguish between information and knowledge – do not bombard people with information.
- > Deploy intelligence to advise stakeholder organisations on policy and strategic directions to take best advantage of new and developing innovations.

Taking it Forward

- Active Intermediaries as Organisational Form: Science Parks, M:KC and MIIF (MIMIT)
- Active Intermediaries as Mechanism for Knowledge Exchange in Multi-Scalar, Multi-Partner Contexts
- Active Intermediaries as Research Method:
 - Mistra Urban Futures Greater Manchester Local Interaction Platform
 - Aim to bridge knowledge reception and application between partners and between scales of action to create ‘urban knowledge arena’
 - Sustainable Urban Development as Fertile Terrain (multi-partner, multi-level)
 - Reflexive research design and ethnographic study

