



Embracing Stakeholder Engagement for Social Innovation Research

Peter Kyriakides is one of many traumatic brain injury survivors sharing his experience with Brain Canada

Social Innovation Program – Traumatic Brain Injury

GOAL: Maximize the return on investment for funded research

STAKEHOLDERS:

“...individuals, organizations or communities that have a direct interest in the process and outcomes of a project, research or policy endeavour”¹

SOCIAL INNOVATION:

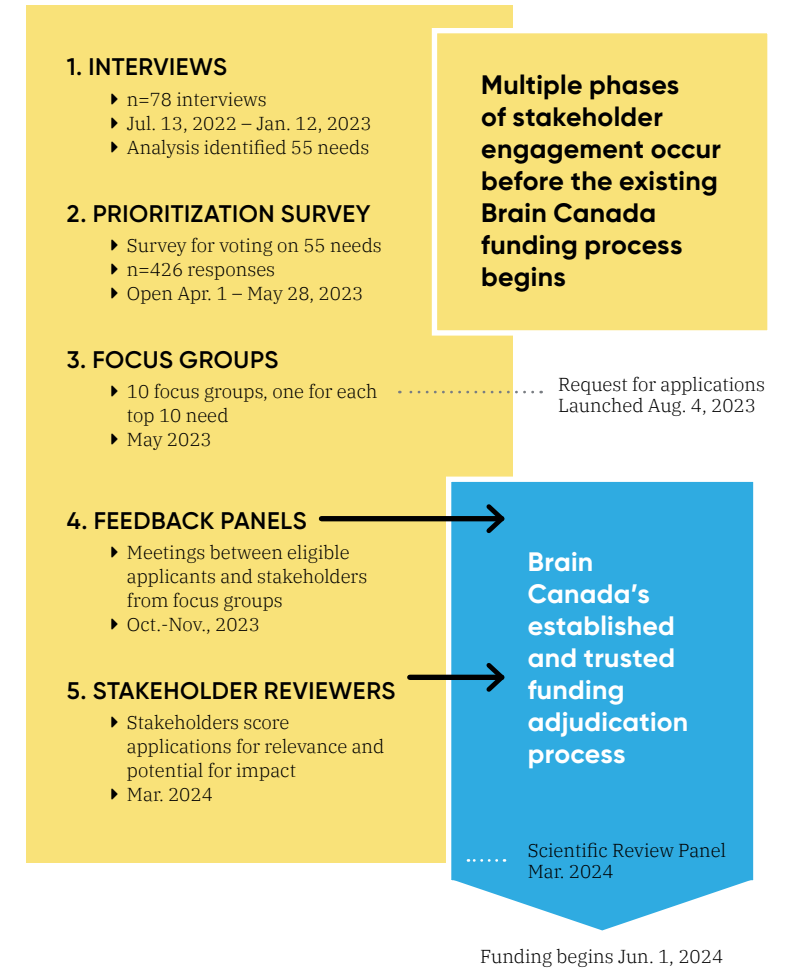
- ▶ New solutions that have the intent and effect of equality, justice and empowerment²
- ▶ Creates value for society³
- ▶ Transformative impacts improve organizations, communities, regions, or systems⁴

-  Stakeholder Engagement done well naturally reflects Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:
 -  **EQUITY**
Empowering non-academic stakeholders to drive the research agenda.
 -  **DIVERSITY**
Seeking the breadth of perspectives required to thoroughly understand the topic. Including relevant perspectives not initially sought, such as those related to Acquired Brain Injury.
 -  **INCLUSION**
Finding ways to involve everyone who wants to participate, such as flexibility with scheduling and format of interview. Purposefully seeking and inviting people in underrepresented groups.
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1. Boaz, A. et al. (2018). How to engage stakeholders in research: design principles to support improvement. *Health Research Policy and Systems*. 16(60): 1-9.
 2. Anderson et al., (2014). Definition and Theory in Social Innovation. Master of Arts in Social Innovation, Danube University, Krems. P. 1-36.
 3. Phills, J.A. et al. (2008). Rediscovering social innovation. *Stanford Social Innovation Review* 6:34-43.
 4. Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/social-innovation-social-finance.html>

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS FOR THIS SOCIAL INNOVATION PROGRAM AT BRAIN CANADA?

Our social innovation programs are driven by stakeholder needs:



This process is informed by:

- ▶ Grounded theory methodology
- ▶ Business Analysis six core concept model
- ▶ Business/Knowledge Mobilization planning
- ▶ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- ▶ Existing Brain Canada adjudication processes
- ▶ Experience

ANTICIPATED SUCCESSES

- ▶ (*Key) stakeholder engagement has helped us understand the gaps in knowledge beyond our own assumptions and understanding.
- ▶ Stakeholder enthusiasm about the process:



You can see leaps and bounds with an organized approach to research, and that has been a big challenge for traumatic brain injury. So, what you're doing is fantastic, to try to focus. – *Clinician researcher*

I'm very impressed that your organization is asking some very good questions. – *Caregiver*

As long as someone like you is listening, we can work on it and make tomorrow a better day, and at the end of the tunnel there is a light. – *Person with lived experience*

I'm thrilled this is happening. – *Caregiver*

We need more of this and keep going, and make it happen! – *Person with lived experience*



CHALLENGES

- ▶ Uncertainty in every moment
- ▶ How to articulate division of \$1.4M available funds across projects in the Request for Applications for the benefit of applicants
- ▶ More diversity across stakeholders means more interviews needed; recruitment and scheduling takes time
- ▶ Current Brain Canada mailing list to announce new funding opportunities is mostly comprised of neuroscientists. The top priorities for the TBI program require reaching out to researchers that are not typically funded by Brain Canada:
 - social sciences
 - health economics
 - policy analysis
 - marketing
 - knowledge mobilization

UNANTICIPATED SUCCESSES

- ▶ Invited presentation for ~50 TBI clinician-researchers mid-process received with interest and engagement
- ▶ Moved by learning that the TBI/ABI community feel they are the “invisible of the invisibles”, we wanted to give them a voice by co-creating the **Globe and Mail insert** which features 9 stories of brain injury survivors, for Brain Awareness Week March 2023 (64,800 printed and distributed to subscribers in Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver)
- ▶ There have been ripple effects through several Brain Canada departments:
 - **PROGRAMS:** to inform and build Social Innovation programs by repeating the same process
 - **PHILANTHROPY:** generated specifics about opportunities in TBI that can inform a case for support; helps in stewardship of potential donors
 - **COMMUNICATIONS:** first time featuring stakeholder voices and building new non-academic audiences; provided new material to share on social media; invitations to podcasts and earned media

LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ Ensure budget is set aside for unanticipated opportunities to create communications pieces featuring stakeholders
- ▶ Use the experience building this pilot program to create a more realistic time horizon for future similar social innovation programs; include rationale and justification to improve understanding and manage expectations among Brain Canada staff as well as future donors
- ▶ Maintain flexibility, adjust timelines according to the program topic, which will inform the breadth and number of stakeholders required



Founded by Dr. Matthew Galati, a traumatic brain injury survivor, Brain Changes Initiative (BCI) is a not-for-profit organization that funds groundbreaking research to improve the standard of care for Traumatic Brain Injury patients. BCI also focuses on knowledge translation to enhance the impact of this vital research for TBI survivors. The **Innovation Grants for Research Impact in Traumatic Brain Injury** funding opportunity is made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund, an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada, through Health Canada, Brain Canada and Brain Changes Initiative.

In collaboration with



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