



## Why is knowledge mobilisation a burning issue?



**Education Alliance Magazine** has asked leading international researchers from the IALEI member universities why knowledge mobilisation in education is crucial today.

### TORONTO

Canada

Professor **Ben Levin**

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto

“There is an increasing interest in making good use of research to improve policy and practice. All researchers should welcome this interest, even if it does have some potential dangers associated with it, since the alternative is to base policy and practice on personal opinion and anecdote.”

### WISCONSIN-MADISON

USA

Researcher **Sarah Mason**

Faculty of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“Knowledge mobilisation is the vehicle for universities to make their core competency – knowledge generation – relevant and actionable in the current technology and information economy.”

### SÃO PAULO

Brazil

Professor **Romualdo Portela de Oliveira**

Faculty of Education, University of São Paulo

“First, because education research is under great scrutiny by financing agencies and other areas in the university; second, because it is a new challenge for researchers to consider questions of the practical implementation of research results.”

### LONDON

Great Britain

Professor **David Gough**

Institute of Education, University of London

“Education is an extremely important part of all our lives and of society in general. Research can be used to help inform the choices that we make about education. Currently we invest much in education research but do not make good use of this investment. Much of the creative new research is hardly ever read. We need a better balance between investment in primary research and its synthesis and its use.”

### BEIJING

China

Dr **Hong Chengwen**

School of Education, Beijing Normal University

“For two reasons: One is that only a fraction of academic research can be mobilised for policy or policy consultation, at least from the perspective of policy makers. The other is that academics complain about the short-sightedness and insensitivity of the policy makers towards research. So the moment that knowledge mobilisation is mentioned, nearly everyone has an opinion about the issue.”

### SEOUL

South Korea

Professor **Lynn Ilon**

Department of Education, Seoul National University

“New theories of knowledge show us how collective, collaborative knowledge is the central driver of society progress and innovation. Knowledge is the very source of growth, innovation and change. It is a catalyst. By releasing it, combining it with other sources and building it into networks of knowledge and innovation, knowledge becomes the mobiliser of change – a dynamic rather than a static product.”



## CAPE TOWN

South Africa

Professor **Johan Müller** & Dr **Ursula Hoadley**  
School of Education, University of Cape Town

“Knowledge mobilisation is a burning issue for two reasons. First, there is a demand for research to become more visible to policy makers, and thus a need to demonstrate its reliability and its value to address worldly problems. Second, policy makers increasingly recognise the need for evidence-based decision making. Knowledge mobilisation is thus a mutually educative process.”

## MELBOURNE

Australia

Professor **John Polesel**  
Melbourne Graduate School of Education, Melbourne University

“The term knowledge mobilisation is rarely used in Australia. Typically, knowledge transfer, knowledge exchange, knowledge utilisation and engagement are the terms used to describe the utilisation of knowledge outside the bounds of teaching and research. Wallis (2006) provides a useful definition framed around the concept of engagement as ‘knowledge generation, use, application and exploitation outside academic environments’. Overall, the literature on knowledge mobilisation argues strongly for greater engagement with local learning communities, for the need for academics to be involved

in educational change and innovation, and for greater collaboration between nations in global industry networks. This kind of collaboration is needed in order to strengthen the research policy nexus and improve educational policy making and practice across the world.”

## SINGAPORE

Singapore

Dr **Teh Laik Woon**  
National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University

“In a globalised knowledge economy, where universities are expected to play multiple roles and practitioners are required to respond ever faster to the changing environment, the demand for universities to facilitate the production, sharing and application of knowledge becomes stronger and stronger. This makes knowledge mobilisation a burning issue.”

## COPENHAGEN

Denmark

Executive Director **Claus Holm**  
Department of Education, Aarhus University

“In Denmark, knowledge mobilisation is closely related to competitiveness. Historically speaking, this is a new type of nation state that mobilises the population and the private sector to compete in the global marketplace by means of research and education.”