

1. Who is a Knowledge User?

In the Canadian research landscape, a **Knowledge User** (KU) is defined as an individual or organization that is likely to be able to use research results to make informed decisions about policies, programs, or practices.

Definition

knowledge user (*utilisatrice ou utilisateur des connaissances*)

An individual:

- a. Who is likely to be able to use the knowledge generated through research in order to make informed decisions about health policies, programs, and/or practices.
- b. whose level of engagement in the research process may vary in intensity and complexity depending on the nature of the research and their information needs;
- c. Who can be, but is not limited to, a practitioner, policy maker, educator, decision maker, health care administrator, community leader, or an **individual** in a health charity, patient group, private sector organization or a media outlet.

A knowledge user is expected to actively participate in the proposed activities but not to direct them.¹

Defining “appropriate knowledge users”

When identifying appropriate knowledge users, applicants should do so in light of the project’s theme, research questions, overall goals, and expected results. Researchers should address the following questions—even in cases where the audience is strictly academic:

- Who stands to benefit from this research?
- Which audiences will be involved, when and how?

¹ Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Glossary of Funding-Related Terms: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/34190.html#k4>

- How will the audience benefit from being involved, and how will the research benefit from their involvement?
- What is the best way to communicate with these audiences?

2. Who is a Knowledge User in the Volt-Age's context

For Volt-Age, potential knowledge users include: *

- **Industry Partners:** Battery manufacturers, EV charging providers, construction firms using new net-zero materials, etc.
- **Policy Makers:** Municipal planners, provincial energy regulators, federal carbon-policy advisors, etc.
- **Communities:** Indigenous community leaders, remote regional cooperatives implementing local microgrids, etc.
- **Practitioners:** Electrical engineers, urban architects, fleet managers, etc.

**Note: These examples are for illustrative purposes and are not exhaustive; many other types of partners and organizations may serve as KUs.*

3. Knowledge Users Vs. Stakeholders

Unlike a “stakeholder” (who may just have an interest in the topic), a knowledge user is an active beneficiary or partner who applies the research in a real-world context by changing a policy, implementing a program, or making informed operational decisions. Their level of involvement in the research process can range from being an engaged partner throughout the project (integrated knowledge translation) to being a targeted audience at the dissemination stage (end-of-grant knowledge translation).

Stakeholders also can be KUs and, in particular, have something to gain or lose as a result of the outcomes of a project, program, or process.

Finally, in the context of Volt-Age and the broader clean energy transition, it is important for researchers to distinguish between a “**Stakeholder**” and a “**Knowledge User**”. While a stakeholder is broadly anyone with an interest in or connection to the research topic, a knowledge user is specifically someone who is positioned to directly use research findings to make decisions about policies, programs, or practices.