



Canadian Regional Development: A Critical Review of Theory, Practice

Ken Carter and Kelly Vodden



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State of Innovation in Canada



Who Dimmed the Lights?
(Conference Board of Canada 2012)

Innovation And Business Strategy: Why Canada
Falls Short
(Council of Canadian Academies 2009)

Innovation Canada: A Call to Action
(Jenkins et al. 2011)

Advancing Innovation in Newfoundland and Labrador
(Hall et al. 2014)

Retreat from Rural

- Perception that policy makers have abandoned rural in Canada
- Focus on urban and agglomeration
- Need for independent action and strategies but also government support
- Needs to be bottom up meets top down

Innovation

- Funders need to broaden the definition of innovation in rural areas to include adapting new technology and new processes that were new to the region as legitimate regional innovation alongside new to world innovation

Challenges

- Innovation literature has urban bias
- State of learning in the country: skills
- Distance and density
- Retreat from rural
- Infrastructure, funding, outmigration
- Lack of trust impeding quadruple helix

Regional Opportunities

- Resource and cultural/heritage assets
- Right size for niche markets
- Megaprojects
- Packaging existing products and services
- Quality of life/natural amenities
- Support agencies highly rated
- People: commitment to place
- Transportation linkages

Findings: support organizations



- “ACOA supported me and ... industry trade and rural development, they’re really good they still support me in marketing and the people they got working for them are really good because they’re on the local level and they understand what’s going on locally so that’s a big plus” respondent

Findings: collaboration



- “you get out of it what you put into it ... if you got time and energy to invest in it you generally get good results” respondent

Findings: missing key participants



- “there is collaboration of facilitators and not doers” respondent

Findings: broader networking

- “I think there’s good networking taking place among businesses and community leaders in their own realm, I think the towns, municipalities, rural developers, they’re doing good networking, businesses are doing good networking whether it’s between businesses or in an industry, I think government within its own circles is doing good networking, but there is a disconnect between those networks” respondent

Findings: openness to new ideas



- “maybe it had to do with Grenfell...with all the people coming in from outside” respondent

Findings: need for planning



- “we need a regional vision that has broad support, with key government and support agencies working to implement the vision”
respondent

Findings: attracting young people



- “you take some kid just came out of university that’s smart and bright and can do all these things and you put something like that plant in their head and they can go and do amazing stuff with it” respondent

Conclusions



- The region needs to be more outward looking
- Build quadruple helix relationships between government, firms, knowledge infrastructure and other support organizations

Conclusions

- Renewed emphasis on learning and skills
 - “knowledge is the most strategic resource and learning the most important process” (Morgan 1997)
- Build entrepreneurship and innovation awareness particularly at the firm level but also among the support agencies and the entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports these firms

Thank-you



Ken Carter

GO Engagement

Project Website:

<http://cdnregdev.ruralresilience.ca>