

# Recap of the Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) Partnership 12th annual gathering

by Britt Amell | 25 June 2025 | Community News, English, Observations, Observations and Responses



This observation was written by Brittany Amell, with special thanks to INKE gathering co-organizers, Jon Bath and Jon Saklofske, for their additions and comments.

## At a glance

Title	Research Creation, Community Engagement, and Open Social Scholarship
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Creator	Implementing New Knowledge Environments Partnership
Time Period / Date	May 1-3, 2025
Keywords	Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE) Partnership, Research Creation, Community Engagement, Open Social Scholarship

## Research Creation, Community Engagement, and Open Social Scholarship

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual gathering of the INKE (Implementing New Knowledge Environments) partnership took place in early May 2025 in the picturesque town of Wolfville, Nova Scotia. The gathering continued INKE’s tradition of fostering dynamic dialogue and collaboration across disciplines, bringing together key practitioners in research creation, open social scholarship, and community engagement to encourage broad and inclusive conversations about centering, empowering, and serving communities through humanities research that focuses on inclusive, generous processes.

Supported by SSHRC and Acadia University, the gathering featured a mix of formal presentations, roundtable discussions, and informal networking opportunities, its central focus remained clear: **research creation, community engagement, and open social scholarship**.

Organized as a single-stream event, the gathering encouraged deep engagement among participants from diverse disciplines. The sessions highlighted commitments to fostering dialogue between institutions and communities through the practices of research creation—a mixture of “approaches and activities that incorporate creative processes and involve the production of artistic works in the context of academic programs” (Chapman & Sawchuk 2012, 13)—and open social scholarship, which “enables the creation, sharing, and engagement of open research by specialists and non-specialists in accessible and significant ways” (INKE landing page).

The gathering opened on May 1, 2025, with a land and body acknowledgment given

by Jon Saklofske (Acadia University, INKE 2025 gathering co-organizer). Attendees were introduced to the conference's themes by Jon Bath (University of Saskatchewan, INKE 2025 gathering co-organizer). Morning sessions explored a range of topics including the practices of artist-researchers, digital platforms, and scholarly practices for sharing knowledge beyond academia. A plenary on research creation featured thought-provoking contributions from Natalie Loveless, Erin Manning, Paloma Dawkins, and Sheena Bennett, each sharing unique creative and scholarly intersections. Afternoon papers explored topics such as epistemic redistribution, citizen histories, community-engaged learning and pedagogies in the digital humanities, and community-centred knowledges. Conversations continued well into the night, as all attendees were welcomed to a no-fee reception and banquet at Lightfoot and Wolfville Vinyards.

Day two of the gathering began with papers focused on research security, preserving digital scholarly infrastructures in the humanities, and efforts to translate the Humanities and Social Sciences Commons into multiple languages. A plenary panel with Padmini Ray Murray, Diane Chin, Keith Carlson, and Debbie Toney explored community advocacy and engagement, as well as reciprocal knowledge creation and sharing. Afternoon presentations featured national and international projects related to sustainable digital development, grant writing for communities, and Indigenous data sovereignty in open scholarship. The final paper session of the day featured a moving series of talks by Western University researchers and collaborators from El Salvador, highlighting co-designed memorials and digital mapping of in Postwar El Salvadorian landscapes—demonstrating how community and academic collaborations can be brought to life in deeply significant ways.

Day three featured lightning talks that highlighted developments in open social scholarship, digital infrastructure, and collaborative publishing interventions. Presenters shared insights on shared repositories, IIIF tools, and future directions for humanities and social sciences research infrastructure. A second round of talks shared insights on supporting research creation, prioritizing digital accessibility in open scholarship, AI experimentations in the digital knowledge commons, and linked data.

Stefano Morello (CUNY Graduate Center), who was announced as the winner of the **2025 Emerging Open Scholarship Award**, showcased his work on the **East Bay Punk Digital Archive**. An afternoon panel focused on the implications of generative

AI, large language models, and knowledge structures unpacked many of the opportunities and ethical concerns associated with generative AI. Nick Thieberger (University of Melbourne) and the PARADISEC team won the **2025 Open Scholarship Award** for the **Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures** (PARADISEC) project.

The gathering concluded with a collective discussion about sustaining momentum in open social scholarship. Participants noted the importance of continuous engagement across sectors, shared infrastructure, and adaptable policy instruments that allow scholarship to remain publicly relevant in rapidly changing digital and social contexts.

## Open Scholarship in Practice

The INKE gathering itself embodied an example of open scholarship in practice: there were no registration fees, sessions were held in accessible community settings, the banquet was inclusively offered to all participants at no additional cost, and meals and social events were designed to encourage informal, cross-sector collaboration. This structure aligned with the very values the event sought to advance—openness, equity, and sustained dialogue.

As the research and policy landscapes continue to shift, events like the INKE Gathering offer more than just academic insights; they serve as testing grounds for alternative scholarly futures. The conversations in Wolfville affirmed the need for continued investment in public-facing scholarship and emphasized the role of collaborative, creative approaches in shaping more responsive and resilient knowledge systems.

## References

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