



# REVIEW **MAP** 2025 NATIONAL

**MAP**  
mobilité  
accès  
participation

mobility  
access  
participation

# Foreword

MAP National 2025 was driven by inspiring energy and a strong sense of cohesion. More than just a presentation of projects, this event was an opportunity to take a collective pause, reflect on the progress made over the past five years, and dream together about the future. Launched in April 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, MAP was born in a context of uncertainty. And yet, it was at this moment that a clear ambition emerged: to make our communities more accessible, inclusive, and equitable for people with disabilities. Led by a diverse team spread across several regions, MAP has built a true community of action. The projects carried out address concrete issues—accessibility, public policy, technology, social justice—in partnership with the people concerned. What sets MAP apart is its desire to do things differently, to break out of silos and create collective knowledge. At the dawn of a new cycle, this meeting rekindled a shared vision and reminded us that the most fruitful ideas often arise on the margins.

**François Routhier**

This gathering is the result of several months—even years—of preparation, coordination, and teamwork. A huge thank you to everyone who pitched in: the organizing committee, speakers, community partners, MAP members... your energy and commitment made it all possible. What brings us together is this powerful idea: obstacles—whether physical, systemic, or related to attitudes—are not limitations, but calls for change. We have been working on this together for five years... and we are not done yet! During these days, we heard courageous ideas, touching stories, and concrete courses of action. Thank you to Jimmy Pelletier, who inspired us from the start, just before his trip around the world! And thank you also to Marie-Louise Bird, Samuel Turcotte, Nathalie Gordon, Jessica Veillet, Willy Allègre, and all those who contributed to our discussions. Finally, thank you all for being there. Together, we are moving toward more inclusive, accessible, and equitable environments.

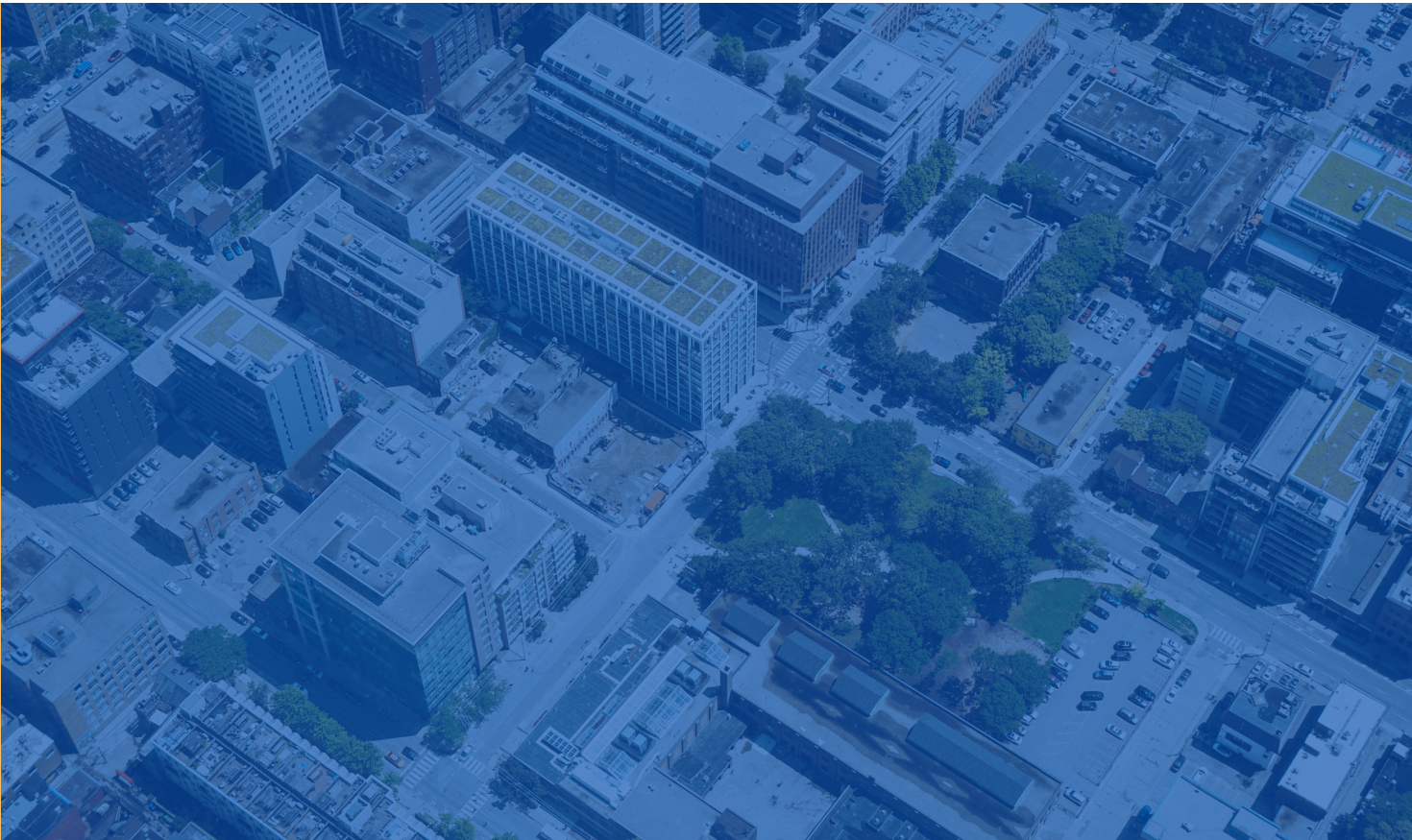
**Krista Best**

Funding for the MAP (Towards Barrier-Free Communities) project was announced in June 2020, in the midst of the pandemic. Since then, these five years have been both intense and hopeful. Our shared goal is to support community organizations and municipalities in designing, evaluating, and implementing concrete, research-based actions to create barrier-free living environments, both in terms of transportation and built and social environments. We have been fortunate to obtain several additional grants, such as the PARCOURS project on accessibility to outdoor recreation, as well as initiatives related to air transportation. MAP has trained many students, including Alfya Battalova, now a professor at Royal Roads University, and Nolwenn Lapierre, who joined INESSS in 2023. National meetings like this one are always a real privilege, allowing us to strengthen our ties and share our successes. Even if progress is made step by step, it shows that we are moving forward together, at the speed of trust and commitment.

**Ben Mortenson**

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# Organizing committee and collaborators

## Event coordination

**Krista Best PhD**, Cirris Researcher, Head of the Participation sociale et villes inclusives research team, Co-Director of the Adaptavie Living Lab

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## Collaborators

**Nathalie Gordon**, Cirris Research Professional, Société Inclusive Liaison Officer

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**Samuel Turcotte PhD**, Researcher at Cirris, Researcher at the Adaptavie Living Lab

**Marie-Louise Bird PhD**, Researcher at the University of Tasmania

**Willy Allègre**, Technological Assistance Lab Advisor, Technical Director at CoWork'HIT

**Anne-Julie Asselin**, Cirris Research Professional, Coordinator of the of the Participation sociale et villes inclusives research team and the Mobility, Access, Participation (MAP) Quebec research group

**Carla Ávila PhD**, Research Associate at LABORARTE (UNICAMP/CNPq)

**Roxanne Perrinet-Lacroix**, Director of Administration and Innovation, Adaptavie

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# Context

In Canada, millions of people live with mobility limitations that impact their daily lives. Getting around, participating in social life, accessing services or public places—these simple tasks can become real challenges when the physical or social environment is not accessible. Although laws exist to promote inclusion, they are often not enough to bring about concrete change in living environments.

It was to address this need that the Mobility, Access, and Participation (MAP) partnership was created in 2020. MAP brings together a variety of partners from academia, the community, and the field to work together to find concrete, realistic, and effective solutions to improve accessibility in our communities. The goal: to ensure that everyone, regardless of their abilities, can move around easily, participate fully in community life, and feel at home.

MAP focuses on three main areas: the pedestrian environment and spatial navigation, transportation accessibility, and social accessibility, i.e., the attitudes, behaviors, and ways of interacting that facilitate or hinder inclusion. All projects are designed in close collaboration with community partners and stakeholders, drawing on their experiences, needs, and ideas. The process is based on a participatory action research approach: we plan together, act together, evaluate what works (and what doesn't), then adapt and share solutions.

Once a year, all MAP project partners and collaborators gather at the MAP National event, which takes place alternately in Vancouver, Quebec City, or online. It is a highlight that illustrates the vitality of the partnership: we share what we have learned over the year, discover current and upcoming projects, and strengthen the human and professional bonds that unite us. It is a space for exchange, co-construction, and inspiration to flourish, together, building more inclusive communities.

This year, from June 9 to 11, the group met in Quebec City at the Pavillon de la Pointe-aux-Lièvres. We enjoyed a rich program of sharing, innovative ideas, experimentation, and networking. This report summarizes the various conferences and activities offered.

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**Monday – Inlufest!** This first festive day began with an inspiring talk by Jimmy Pelletier, a high-level athlete who is embarking on a round-the-world trip to promote inclusion. Interactive kiosks, showcase projects, and trials of adapted sports equipment then allowed participants to discover the diversity of initiatives carried out within the group.

**Tuesday – Research Day:** A dynamic day of co-creation where members reflected together on research priorities, knowledge mobilization strategies, and impact indicators for the MAP group. Stimulating discussions, shared ideas... all wrapped up with a friendly cocktail reception!

**Wednesday – Student workshop:** To close the event, students were introduced to the Medical Education Empowered by Theater (MEET) methodology in an immersive workshop led by Brazilian researcher Carla Cristina Oliveira de Ávila.

# Jimmy Pelletier's conference

## Adapt or Survive

Jimmy Pelletier kicked off the 2025 edition of MAP National with a lecture inspired by the key values of our research: commitment, inclusion, and empowerment. This lecture was made possible thanks to the support of Adaptavie, a partner of the MAP team. Since 1980, Adaptavie has been committed to the inclusion and well-being of people living with disabilities, focusing on sports, recreation, and personalized support. Touched by this meaningful mission, Jimmy Pelletier became an ambassador for the organization. Here is his moving, inspiring, and hopeful story:

Jimmy Pelletier was born on December 30, 1976, in Baie-Comeau. It became clear early on that Jimmy was a very active child with a passion for physical activity. Inspired by his brothers' achievements, he devoted himself body and soul to sports. High-level sports became a source of fulfillment, discipline, and connection to others.

On August 29, 1996, at the age of 19, Jimmy fell asleep at the wheel of his car. He woke up in the hospital with his mother by his side. He then learned that he would never walk again. It was a shock. He couldn't remember the exact moment or the last time he had walked. While still in the hospital, he happened to see a TV program that would mark the beginning of a real change. He watched a broadcast of a performance by Dean Bergeron, a Paralympic athlete. He saw a man in a wheelchair, smiling and determined. It was a turning point: Jimmy decided that this would also be his story: "Adapt or survive." He chose to acknowledge the burden of disability while moving forward to adapt to his new situation.

### A new springboard: sports

After eight months of rehabilitation following his accident, Jimmy took up athletics. That same summer, he participated in the Défi Sportif AlterGo, a 10km race. This marked the beginning of a new chapter in his life: adaptive sports. He trained, traveled, and used every means possible to push himself and rise to the challenge. Along the way, he met Dean Bergeron, who became his mentor. Ten years after his accident, in 2006, he achieved his goal and represented Canada at the Paralympic Games in Turin.

# Inclufest

## Stands and activities

The first day of MAP National turned into an interactive festival, inviting participants to explore, touch, try out, and discuss a variety of research projects, all focused on the inclusion and social participation of people with disabilities.

We were invited to take part in an immersive experience, testing out adapted sports equipment provided by Adaptavie's Living Lab. The experiences of moving and participating in sports with reduced mobility made the daily obstacles faced by many people tangible.

On the theme of accessibility in the built environment, several booths offered innovative tools: the SWAN app for assessing the accessibility of one's neighborhood, approaches to reconciling heritage and accessibility, and the sharing of experiences from municipal advisory committees on disability.

Navigating urban spaces was also in the spotlight. With the interactive board game *On the Move*, young and old alike were able to step into the shoes of wheelchair users. Several technological demonstrations were on offer, such as guidance apps, training programs, and even a virtual reality platform designed to help users practice avoiding obstacles.

The issue of transportation also sparked numerous discussions: infographics, studies on carpooling, adapted transportation for families, the use of active transportation lanes by wheeled device users, and experiences at airports highlighted the complexity of mobility. Practical solutions, such as a public transportation training program, were presented by committed teams.

In terms of sports and leisure, visitors could try out innovative outdoor equipment (including the famous Joelette) and learn about matching platforms to promote inclusive outdoor activities.

Pressing issues were explored, specifically the impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations and innovative solutions to provide services and resources to disabled people in a climate emergency.

The world of rehabilitation services offered even more innovations: a mobile app to teach the use of walking aids, a guide for training children to use wheelchairs, a virtual platform to encourage healthy lifestyles at home, and an intergenerational project designed with and for people living with traumatic brain injuries.

This dynamic fair was much more than just an exhibition: it was a rare opportunity to connect research, citizens, municipalities, and community organizations in a fun and collaborative spirit. Visitors could ask questions, share their experiences, and leave with concrete ideas for transforming their living environment.



# World Cafe

## Research Priorities

The Play Café, held on June 10 as part of MAP National, was a creative and fun adaptation of the traditional World Café. The main objective was to stimulate collective intelligence around the issues of knowledge mobilization, evaluation, and sustainability in complex research ecosystems, while promoting inclusion and active participation.

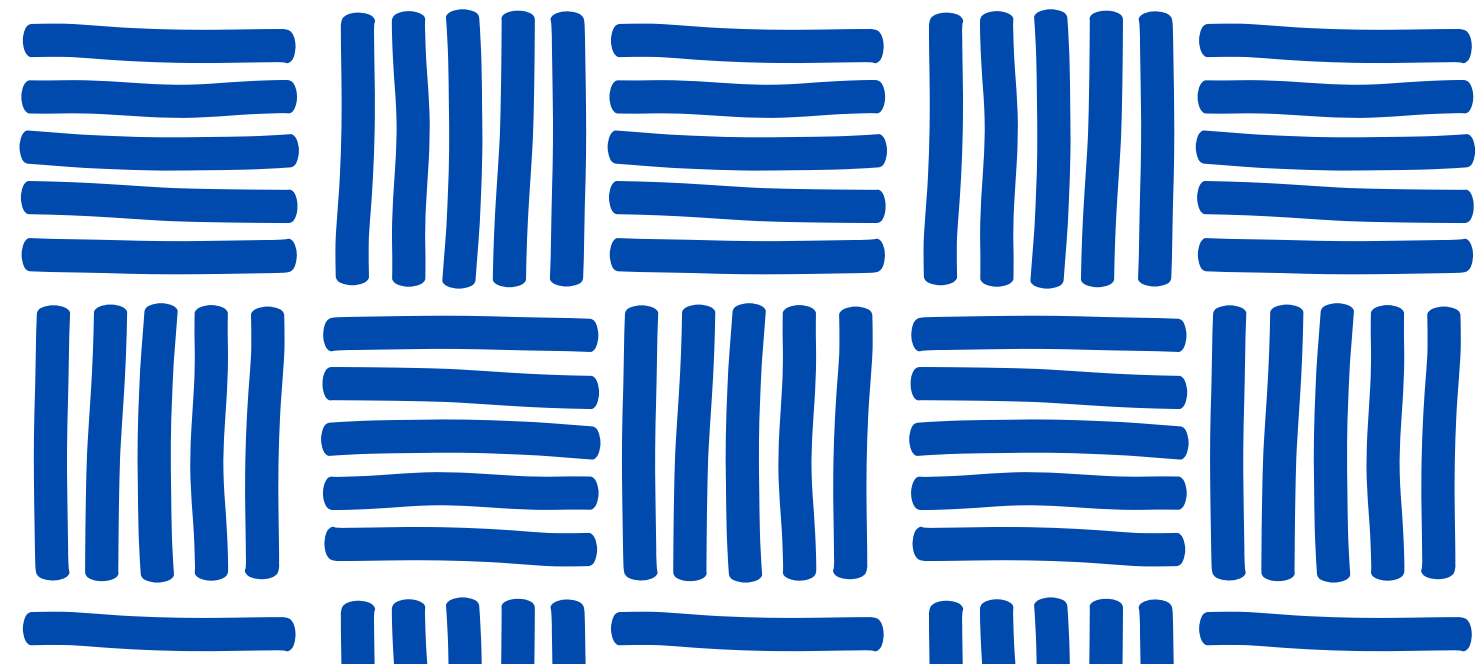
The activity took place in three 45-minute rounds, each focusing on a strategic question. Participants alternated between discussions, creating artifacts (Lego objects, drawings, and clay models), and collective sharing. This multisensory approach aimed to make abstract ideas visible and encourage nonverbal expression. In addition, a graphic designer created live illustrations summarizing the discussions.

Inclusion was at the heart of the process: an accessible venue, bilingual facilitation, a variety of modes of expression, and individualized support for participants with disabilities. Each table had a trained facilitator, ensuring that all voices were heard.

could possibly say " Participants actively engaged in the process of creation, observation, critical thinking, and dialogue. Through the activity emerged a spontaneous "gallery walk" in which participants moved around to observe and comment on the creations of other groups. The gallery walk, although it was a planned component of the day, occurred naturally, demonstrating a willingness and flexibility to adapt the activity to the pace and movement of the group.

The Play Café provided an opportunity to explore the value of art and serious play as levers for engagement, inclusion, and co-construction. This innovative experience demonstrated that creativity and flexibility can enrich strategic thinking in diverse research networks.

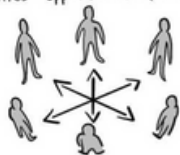
Here are the results of the guest graphic designer's drawings...



**Objectif principal:** soutenir le développement de communautés accessibles.  
Qu'avons-nous fait dans les 5 derniers ans et quelles sont les prochaines étapes?



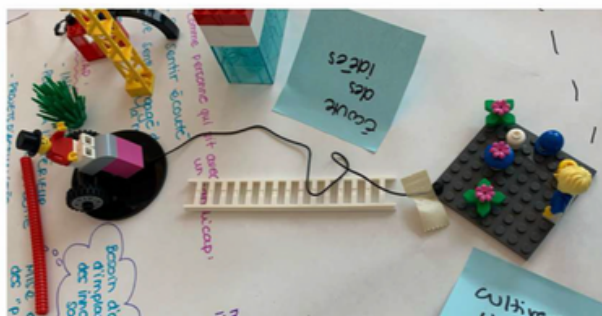
Belles opportunités, mais...



Défis de MAP:  
+ de communication à l'interne  
+ de clarté dans les rôles des étudiants



Échanges pan-canadiens?  
IDÉE: Stages & possibilité de participer à des projets ailleurs au Canada.



**CONCLUSION:** Sur l'artefact, le chercheur (bonhomme) et étudiants (têtes) sont connectés au patient par un fil. Une échelle entre les deux symbolise les étapes nécessaires à ce dialogue. Les fleurs représentent la cultivation des projets communs.

**DEUXIÈME DISCUSSION:** Comment décideriez-vous de ce qui doit être implanté? Qu'est-ce qui fait qu'un projet est cool/on veut le mettre plus de l'avant?

Impact du projet: est-ce qu'il va être utile?



... Pour la population concernée!



Intérêt & politique



Il faut marketer le projet pour susciter de l'intérêt.



Temps: Court & long  
terme = important

Exemple "MOTS D'ENFANTS"

Plateforme en ligne pour soutenir le dev. du langage chez les jeunes avec un trouble.



Faisabilité: Argent + parrainage (subventions)



✓ Projet réaliste  
✓ Utile à la population visée  
✓ Parrainé par le CIUSS

ULTIMEMENT, l'accès aux ressources fait une grande différence.



Équipe engagée et bien formée.



Locaux, matériels, stratégies d'implantation.



**CONCLUSION:** L'artefact représente un meuble IKEA. Comme pour un projet, construire un meuble prend plusieurs considérations (emplacement du meuble, quels matériels, combien de temps, etc) et du travail d'équipe.

**TROISIÈME DISCUSSION:** En tant qu'équipes, quelles sont nos actions prioritaires dans un avenir rapproché?

Comment utiliser le projet une fois la recherche terminée?

• Transfert de connaissances  
• Implémentation



Créer des outils + accessibles que les articles en anglais.  
Un site web/banque de résultats?

ENJEU: transport hivernal



\* Plus accessible pour le public non-scientifique.

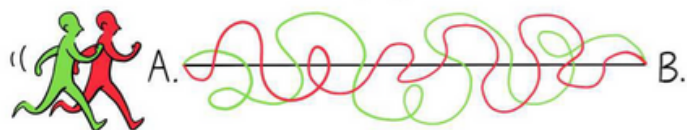


ENJEU: Recrutement  
Comment impliquer une diversité de patients dans les projets? (Nouvelles voix)



• Contacter des patients non-recrutés est difficile  
• Organismes limités  
• Plan d'action

Comment adapter un projet en cours de route?



Un projet est un chemin sinueux.  
Garder un esprit scientifique MAIS rester  
souple & ouvert aux nouvelles opportunités.

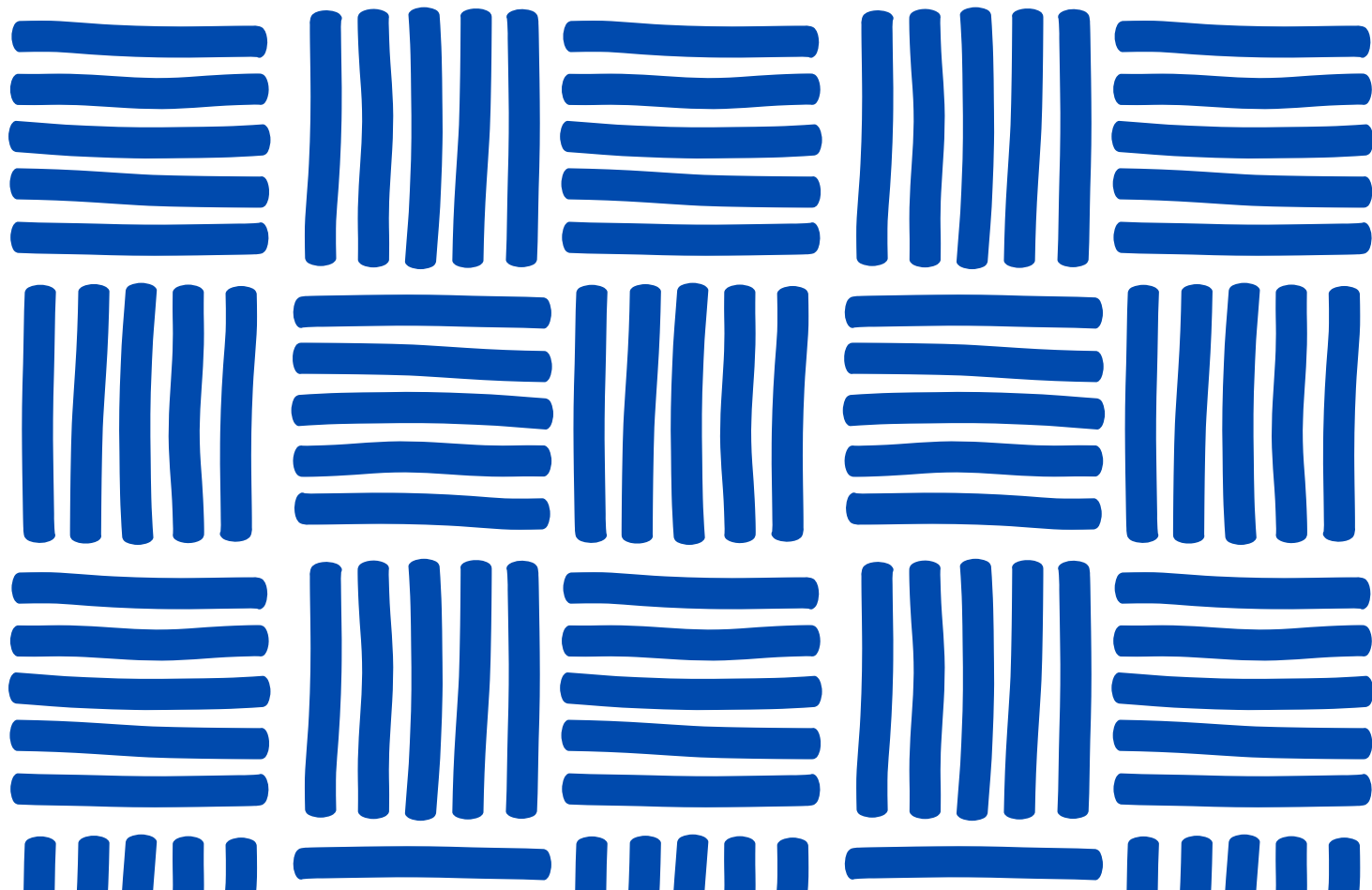


**CONCLUSION:** L'artefact représente le chemin à la fois rigide et souple d'un projet. La maison garde les résultats sous un même toit accessible. Les personnes symbolisent l'échantillon diversifié de participants que nous tentons d'atteindre.

**Notes supplémentaires:** Consolider ce qui est déjà bon à propos de MAP. Travailler avec des organisations & non-scientifiques, mélangeant différentes approches et changeant notre manière d'approcher la recherche. Encourager la consolidation entre Vancouver & Québec.



Comic strip by Éli



# KT strategy

## for the MAP team

Led by Nathalie Gordon and Jessica Veillet, the second workshop of the day aimed to establish a systematic knowledge mobilization strategy for current and future MAP projects in order to optimize the collection, dissemination, and implementation of the knowledge and innovations developed by the team. Team members participated in an exercise that allowed them to take stock of ideas and then rank their priority. Many innovative ideas were proposed, and participants then voted for their favorite ideas using stickers in a fun and colorful way. Four main ideas were selected by the team following this process :

1) First, it was proposed that MAP hire a dedicated communications officer, whose mandate would be to adapt the knowledge generated during projects and disseminate it to various target audiences.

This idea will require fundraising and recruitment initiatives. It was also proposed to hire a firm specializing in this field, such as Savoir Média.

2) The second idea that was adopted was to make it mandatory, at the start of each project, to submit a concrete, non-academic knowledge mobilization plan. This plan should include project partners and stakeholders. A template should be created to facilitate the drafting of this plan and systematize its content. This idea was also developed through the addition of various activities to be organized, such as lunchtime conferences in various organizations or community - and general public - oriented scientific happy hours.

3) The third idea highlighted the group's interest in knowledge fragmentation, an approach derived from atomic research<sup>1</sup> that allows results to be used in part or in whole, depending on the needs of the partners. Implementing this method in MAP will require the creation of a fragmentation tool and the availability of conclusions on the website.

4) The last idea prioritized was to update the MAP website with a view to optimizing the user experience. In this regard, the relevance of classifying items by theme and project progress was discussed. There was also discussion about systematically making summarized research results available in graphic format (e.g., one-pagers, infographics, comics) as well as in audiovisual format (e.g., videos). The website content should also be systematically accessible in both languages.

The activity concluded with a collective assumption of responsibility, during which the group members placed their names on the actions to which they could contribute. Follow-up will be carried out on the implementation of the four ideas over the coming months and with a view to the renewal of MAP.

<sup>1</sup> La grande Ourse. (2021). L'Atomic UX Research.  
<https://Lagrandeourse.Design/Blog/Ux-Research/Atomic-Ux-Research-Definition-et-Avantages/>.

# Indicators and impact

## assessment

During the last workshop of the day on June 10, Willy Allègre gave a virtual presentation from Brittany on a structured evaluation approach based on three complementary scales: project, territory, and organization. This approach draws inspiration from several initiatives (REHAB-LAB, Handicap Innovation Territoire - HIT, and CoWork'HIT), each of which offers specific methodological frameworks and indicators.

The REHAB-LAB example highlights a logical model based on activity, outcome, and impact indicators:

- Activities: number of co-designed projects, users, and professionals involved.
- Results: technical aids developed, training provided.
- Impacts: increased adoption and autonomy rates, beneficiary satisfaction, international dissemination (badges, certification).

These indicators are broken down according to the SMART method (Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic, Time-bound).

At the organizational level, CoWork'HIT, an innovation and expertise structure, applies a typology of indicators combining:

- Activity (number of services provided, training courses, services subscribed to).
- Economic (turnover, full-time equivalent jobs, customer types).
- Impact (number of co-designed solutions, satisfaction rate).
- Innovation (tested prototypes, new solutions, publications).
- Local roots (actions carried out in Brittany/outside Brittany, agreements signed).
- Outreach (participation in national or European networks).

## Collective work and limitations encountered

Following the presentation, participants worked in subgroups on different research projects in an attempt to apply these evaluation methods to their own contexts. This exercise illustrated the richness of the tools proposed, but also their limitations in the field of social research. Several people expressed difficulties in quantifying qualitative concepts such as satisfaction, improved quality of life, or increased social participation. Quantitative indicators are relevant for demonstrating scope and structural impact. However, it remains complex to account for the subjective impact of projects on individual and collective trajectories. These discussions opened up avenues for combining quantitative measures and more narrative approaches in order to better capture the diversity and subtlety of social impacts.

# MEET | Student Workshop

## Medical Education Empowered by Theater

We concluded MAP National with an immersive theater experience! On Wednesday, June 11, graduate students from the group were invited to participate in an extraordinary immersive experience: the MEET<sup>2</sup> (Medical Education Empowered by Theater) workshop, led by Brazilian professor and artist Carla Ávila. This workshop, based on an innovative pedagogical approach developed at the State University of Campinas (Brazil), combines theater, social sciences, and health training. Inspired by the ideas of Paulo Freire<sup>3,4</sup> and the practices of Augusto Boal's<sup>5</sup> Theater of the Oppressed, the MEET methodology offers a safe, critical, and creative space to revisit the way we relate to one another. In particular, it allows us to address the challenges of social intervention and care contexts for people living with disabilities.

During this intensive workshop, participants explored fundamental questions related to listening, the ethics of care, professional identity, and relational dynamics through the body, speech, and imagination. Alternating between theatrical games, improvisations, simulated clinical interviews, and group role-playing, MEET offered a unique opportunity to develop a reflective and sensitive approach to the complexity of human interactions. Under the kind and inspiring guidance of Carla Ávila, participants were encouraged to feel, to doubt, to experiment and, above all, to grow in their role as learners and future professionals. No theater experience was required: only a sincere commitment, an openness to experimentation, and comfortable clothing were necessary.

The MEET workshop thus contributed to enriching MAP National's educational offering by emphasizing the human, emotional, and relational dimensions of health research and practice. Through a methodology deeply rooted in creativity, this workshop sowed seeds of reflection and empathy that will undoubtedly continue to germinate well beyond the event.

<sup>2</sup> de Carvalho Filho, M. A., Ledubino, A., Frutuoso, L., da Silva Wanderlei, J., Jaarsma, D., Helmich, E., & Strazzacappa, M. (2020). Medical education empowered by theater (MEET). In *Academic Medicine* (Vol. 95, Issue 8, pp. 1191–1200). Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

<sup>3</sup> Freire P. (2021). *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. 201 pages.

<sup>4</sup> Freire P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. 232 pages.

<sup>5</sup> Boal A. (2019). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. London: Pluto Press. 208 pages.

Thank you to our many community and municipal partners, as well as to everyone who attended this event!

