



**PARKLAND INSTITUTE
FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

**SELF-STUDY REPORT
DECEMBER 2008**

(Edited December 2009)

parkland institute self-study report
DECEMBER 2008

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Parkland Institute Self-Study Report

December 2008

The success of the Parkland Institute in taking the University out into the community and bringing the community back into the University is impressive and seems to be well recognized in the University administration.

- A report from the Site-Visit Peer-Review Committee on the Globalism Project for SSHRC (Feb 14, 2003).

1. INTRODUCTION

Parkland Institute, located in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta, is an Alberta-wide, non-partisan research network. Parkland studies economic, social, cultural, and political issues challenging Albertans and Canadians, using the perspective of political economy. The results of this research are shared widely by the Parkland and used to promote broad scholarly and public discussion of the issues. We accomplish this by producing publicly accessible research reports that are disseminated broadly to the public at large, academics and policy makers through the media, the internet, conferences, symposia and direct mail.

Parkland operates as a network hub. The Institute only has six staff at a complement of 4.5 full time equivalents (FTE). This includes the Director, a research director, an executive director and three administrative support positions. On occasion Parkland hires contractors to conduct research or organize conferences and events. Parkland's Director is seconded from his or her home department to the institute on the basis of a teaching reduction that Parkland funds. The Director uses his or her seconded time (0.3 full time equivalent) to do administrative, research and public engagement work. Parkland has no faculty position independent of that of the seconded Director. It offers no courses. Only one staff person, the research director, is dedicated to research and that role is mostly one of coordination.

Parkland is financially self-sufficient, fundraising adequate revenues to cover all of our research, program and operating costs. Parkland also receives important in-kind support from the Faculty of Arts in the form of a building, access the university's administrative infrastructure, and the ability to purchase a course release for the director. Parkland Institute's revenue stream has shown steady growth in its last five years of operations. In the 2003/2004 fiscal year total revenue was approximately \$260,000. This amount has grown by 50% to just over \$390,000 in the organization's most recent fiscal year, an average annual growth of \$50,000. Virtually all of Parkland's revenue comes from individual and organizational donations and fundraising, with significant amounts coming from fundraising activities and its existing endowment (for full details, please see the financial summary in Section 9 and Appendix 18). Membership in the Parkland Institute is based on donations—any person or group that donates at least \$20 per year is considered a member, and in turn receives a subscription to *The Post* and discounted rates to events.

Parkland's Director reports to the Dean of Arts and to the Parkland Board of Directors. Half of the members of the Board of Directors are academics from across the province and the other half are from the broader community. The dean has a representative on the board (see the organizational chart in Appendix 1 for more detail).

Parkland operates as a province wide network. Academic and community researchers engage with and write reports for Parkland on a volunteer basis. They may participate as Board or Research Committee members, writers, peer reviewers, advisors or through participating in symposia and events. They may also be donors.

This network model is the core of Parkland, linking the University of Alberta with other universities and the broader community. Since 1996, Parkland Institute has been a pioneer in building and deepening community–university research alliances. Parkland’s network model was launched three years before SSHRCC, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, began their CURA [community university research alliances] granting program. However, it is very similar to that program in that, like SSHRCC, the founders of Parkland believed in the research and dissemination benefits to be gained by working as equal partners with community organizations and leaders from a diversity of backgrounds.

Within post-secondary institutions, Parkland includes researchers who are involved in interdisciplinary and socially-engaged research and thinking. In the broader Alberta community, Parkland works with a diverse cross-section of organizations including: religious organizations, trade unions, the arts community, non-profit organizations, environmental organizations, feminist organizations, businesses, and other social movements. The composition of the Board of Directors reflects these diverse publics.

In the University of Alberta’s Academic Plan, *Dare to Deliver*, one of the four cornerstones is community engagement near and far. Parkland is a key conduit to consolidating and expanding community partnerships. Our strength lies in encouraging the long-term participation of organizations and individuals because their engagement is based on research that is accessible and transformative.

1.1 History

Parkland began in 1996, with three years of seed funding from the Faculty of Arts. Its inaugural book, *Shredding the Public Interest*, by Kevin Taft, was co-published with the University of Alberta Press. It was a publishing success, selling about 13,000 copies in Alberta in the six weeks leading up to the March 1997 provincial election. For context, the standard measure used by Canadian booksellers for a Canadian best seller is 5,000 books sold in one year. Dave King, former Education Minister in Peter Lougheed’s Conservative government acknowledged that the book had an enormous impact on the election. *The Economist* stated that "Mr. Taft may be right...Maybe the whole 'Klein Revolution' as it is called, was unnecessary."¹

Since then, Parkland Institute has published 32 reports, five more books and over 50 op-ed articles. The reports were written by 25 different authors. The opinion pieces were written mostly by the Director, the Research Director and the Executive Director. The work consistently meets a high standard with all reports and papers peer-reviewed before publication.

1.2 Major Accomplishments in the Past Five Years

In the past five years, major achievements include launching an endowment program with a million dollar donation, hiring our first, full-time research director and opening a Calgary office,

now staffed with a full-time person. In that period we have published 33 opinion pieces in major newspapers, 18 reports, 2 books, 2 book chapters, and 2 occasional papers.

This growth has enabled Parkland to dramatically increase our national impact. Our commentary is sought regularly by public and private radio, television and print media, provincially and nationally. Nationally, Parkland has been featured on CBC's "The Current" eight times in the past five years, including debating John Manley, former Deputy Prime Minister and Tom D'Aquino, Chief Executive and President of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE).

This report will show that Parkland is now a leading national think-tank (public policy research center). The sections on outputs and impacts will show that its outputs are impressive by any standard and compare well with other think tanks, most of which are many times its size. Parkland is recognized across Canada as an important research centre on public policy. Parkland's expertise on issues of health, investment agreements, and energy policy is sought from outside Alberta, with requests for briefings from government entities such as Industry Canada, Parliament's International Trade Committee, major federal political parties including the Liberals, New Democrats and Greens, as well as community organizations such as the Council of Canadians, the Polaris Institute, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and unions. Groups in British Columbia, the North West Territories and the Yukon have sought Parkland's policy expertise on finance and budgets in resource-rich contexts, as have groups from outside Canada including in Australia, Norway and Mexico.

As Parkland's profile and output have grown, speaking invitations now come in regularly from a wide diversity of groups. Some examples are: the Alberta Social Credit Party, the Treasury Management Association of Canada, the Financial Executives International, Post-Carbon Toronto, local chapters of the Friends of Medicare, the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, the Rotary Club, and university departments across Canada.

These are a few highlights. This self-study report describes the strengths of Parkland Institute in more detail and documents our achievements over the last five years, noting Parkland's distinctive directions in research, academic debate and community outreach. Where data are available we compare Parkland with academic and community research institutes across Canada. As well, this report describes Parkland's strategic goals for broadening the scope and impact of our work. It also describes the challenges we need to meet.

This report represents a collaborative effort. The process began with a staff planning retreat in August, where foundations of the draft strategic plan were developed. Research Advisory Committee members, a board sub-committee, and a student intern all participated by way of a half-day meeting to review the draft report, or by providing insightful comments on various drafts. The document was written by the director, research director, and executive director. We have learned much in this process of self-reflection, and we look forward to the feedback and suggestions of the reviewers.

2. MISSION AND STRATEGIC GOALS

Parkland's strategic goal is to double our impact in public policy research and citizen engagement work (as measured by publications, events, media hits and website traffic) in Alberta and nationally in the next five years (see the draft strategic plan in Appendix 2). This report assesses Parkland's ambitious agenda and progress towards these goals.

2.1 Mission and Values

Parkland's values include being open, critical, innovative, transformative, and solutions oriented. We focus on diversity, social justice, equity and environmental sustainability. Our mission is implemented within this value framework.

Parkland's Mission:

- ❖ To do top quality policy research focussing on Canadian energy security and environmental sustainability, social justice, and social equity.
- ❖ To lead and expand the policy and political debate through research and outreach programming that changes the framing of issues in Alberta and Canada.
- ❖ To do policy research that is transformative, proposing positive policy solutions that lead to systemic and structural changes that improve quality of life and social justice.
- ❖ To help inform an engaged public by publishing our research in accessible language, disseminating our work widely, and by creating spaces (colloquia, conferences, symposia, web dialogues) where academics and citizens can actively engage with each other on current issues.
- ❖ To foster provincial, national and international research networks and synergies.

Parkland's mission aligns very well with a key goal of *Dare to Deliver*: "Demonstrate the contribution of university discovery and scholarship to public policy and enhance these social, cultural, and economic dividends by celebrating and rewarding achievements in knowledge translation and dissemination."

3. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

3.1 Administrative Governance

Parkland's dual role as academic institute and think tank is reflected in parallel governance structures – the Dean of Arts and a Board of Directors (see Organizational Structure in Appendix 1). On the academic side, Parkland Institute's director, Professor Gordon Laxer (Sociology) has ultimate responsibility for Parkland and reports to the dean.

Parallel to this, Parkland has a Board of Directors recruited from across Alberta. Half the board members are academics and the other half are representatives of community organizations and interested individuals. Academic board members are drawn from the Universities of Calgary, Lethbridge, Athabasca, and Alberta, with one academic position rotating through some of the smaller universities and colleges in Alberta. The Associate Dean of Arts (Research) also sits on Parkland's board as a representative of the Dean of Arts. The board meets three times per year. A full list of board members is attached as Appendix 3.

Parkland currently has approximately 800 donors, which include individuals and institutions. Parkland is accountable to its donors through the annual report and the annual general meeting, as well as regular communications such as newsletters and a website.

Parkland's director oversees the institute's overall direction, provides intellectual leadership, and shares the role of organizational spokesperson with the next two positions. The executive director is responsible for day to day operations, communications, and staff. The research director oversees all research projects, contract staff and conducts her own research program (see Job Descriptions in Appendix 19, and Roles and Responsibilities in Appendix 21).

3.2 Research Governance

Even-handedness and research excellence are maintained through a number of governance measures. First, to maintain independence and quality of research findings, all of Parkland's work is independently reviewed for academic standards and accuracy. The attached Peer Review Guidelines (Appendix 6) outline this process.

Second, a Research Advisory Committee oversees Parkland's research output (see Appendix 7 for Research Advisory Committee terms of reference, and Appendix 8 for current members). It is comprised of board members, academics and researchers from across Alberta. It helps set Parkland's annual research agenda and participates in the peer review process. Funders are diverse and play no part in reviewing editorial content or publication decisions.

In addition to research advisors, individual research projects often have a project advisory committee, comprising individuals, academics and organizational representatives with expertise on the topic area. These committees report to the research director.

The research director also oversees contract researchers. The attached contract sets out the parameters for contract research (see Appendix 9).

Research visioning and planning is done at the staff level (including the Director), the Research Advisory Committee level, and the board. In the past three years, the following planning and visioning sessions have been held:

- Board research visioning session with staff, board, Research Advisory Committee and other key stakeholders. Sept. 2005.
- Board research planning and visioning session. April 2007.
- Staff planning retreat. Aug. 2008.
- Research Advisory Committee visioning session. Oct. 2008.

These sessions set a framework to guide the research director and Research Advisory Committee.

4. RESEARCH SPECIALIZATION AND COLLABORATIONS

Parkland Institute conducts research within the long-established intellectual framework of political economy. The tradition has a storied pedigree and counted among its diverse adherents are Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Karl Marx, John Stuart Mill, Max Weber and Karl Polanyi. Political economists begin with the premise that the economy is not a separate sphere, operating according to its own laws. They assume that the economy is embedded in political, social, cultural and environmental contexts.

Harold Innis, the greatest Canadian thinker of the twentieth century, according to John Ralston Saul, established a distinctive Canadian approach to political economy. The approach explores the interconnections amongst politics, the economy, technology, culture, social structure in a

holistic way, from a profoundly historical and social change perspective. Political economists study forces of change, forces that resist change, and conflicts of interest in society.

Canadian social scientists paid a lot of attention to these questions. These studies coincided with an era in which governments played a leading role in the economy. Recently, when markets overshadowed the role of governments, academics partly shifted away to other questions. Now the political economy perspective has never been more relevant, given that the current deep economic crisis has catapulted governments into taking the lead in reorganizing the economy and society. Parkland's use of political economy makes it a critical centre to generate an understanding of Alberta and Canadian policy contexts within wider global dynamics.

Within the general field of Canadian political economy, Parkland has developed a set of research specializations including: democracy and the role of government, Canadian energy security policy, building a just and sustainable economy, and health care.

4.1 Revitalizing Democracy and the Role of Government

Parkland has made a solid contribution to research on democracy. Our expertise in this area was launched early in Parkland's existence with Kevin Taft's 1997 bestselling book *Shredding the Public Interest*. Trevor Harrison, William Johnston and Harvey Krahn made another major contribution in 2003 with *Citizen's Views on Democracy in Alberta*. Subsequent research has built on this foundation, with reports on issues including the weakness of democracy in budgets, and whistleblower legislation. Parkland recently co-published *The Return of the Trojan Horse: Alberta in the New World (Dis)Order* (a complete list of all of Parkland's publications to date is in Appendix 10).

Within this specialization, Parkland's research has included questions related to privatization including issues of democracy, transparency and accountability as well as social justice. Reports have included analysis of highway maintenance, health care, liquor stores, electricity, and waste treatment.

4.2 Energy Policy

Parkland has also led the policy debate on royalties and resource revenue management. This expertise was sparked by Parkland's groundbreaking 1999 report *Giving Away the Alberta Advantage: Are Albertan's receiving maximum revenue from our oil and gas?* This was followed by many provincial and national collaborations on energy policy and revenue management that brought the royalties debate into the mainstream. Parkland has also led a national policy dialogue on Canadian energy security policy, including hosting and participating in conferences, speakers series, national research symposia, and joint initiatives.

More recently, Parkland has advanced cutting edge research on trade and Canadian energy security and sovereignty embodied in the following reports: *Towards an Energy Security Strategy for Canada; Fuelling Fortress America; Freezing in the Dark; and Over a Barrel.*

4.3 Building a Just and Sustainable Economy

Parkland has developed a specific niche of expertise in providing analysis of Alberta's budget. Annually, Parkland studies budget issues and provides commentary. The institute forms a budget

advisory committee of six members, half academics and half community researchers. This team oversees and often authors a report which is peer reviewed. Parkland's budget reports have explored financial questions of transparency, funding for public programs, financial sustainability, resource revenues, saving for the future, and the public interest. These reports have been used on the Legislature floor for guidance in budget analysis by MLAs as well as stimulating significant media interest with interview requests for public and private radio and television.

Parkland's unique expertise in budget analysis in the context of natural resource booms led research institutes and unions in the Yukon and North West Territories to request that Parkland contribute policy analysis of their territory budgets. The value of this analysis is evidenced by invitations for Parkland to present to the NWT Government's Standing Committee on Finance and to brief the Finance Minister.

Parkland has consistently been a strong voice on the policy stage regarding inequality, incomes, social justice, and equity. Parkland launched this research specialization in 2001 with *Advantage for Whom: Declining Family Incomes in a Growing Alberta Economy*. In the past five years, inequalities have been a regular theme of conferences, symposia and reports including the 2007 high-profile release of *Spoils of the Boom: Incomes, profits and poverty in Alberta*, which spotlighted the growing problems of homelessness, inequality and poverty in Alberta's resource rich economy.

4.4 Healthcare

In the past five years Parkland published two reports and one book on healthcare, including [http://www.ualberta.ca/PARKLAND/research/studies/Seniors_Report %28web%29.pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/PARKLAND/research/studies/Seniors_Report%28web%29.pdf) the 2006 book *The Bottom Line*. Parkland also brought notable scholars to Alberta to contribute an international and comparative perspective to this debate at the Weighing the Evidence (April 2006) conference which paralleled the government's own public consultation and international conference on the same topic. Parkland has also been sought as a resource on health care at many provincial and national events.

4.5 Research Collaborations – Interdisciplinary, Multidisciplinary, Provincial, National and International

Dare to Discover emphasizes incubating scholarship through collaborations: "Our incubator concept will bring together people who do not normally come together, from across the hall and from across the world, by providing special environments in which innovative thinking can take place." Parkland is such a site.

Parkland Institute's founding documents state, "As a field of study, political economy is a highly interdisciplinary endeavour, drawing on the contributions of social scientists in economics, history, cultural studies, political science, sociology, and anthropology." Additionally, as a public-policy institute, Parkland's research is more 'society-driven.' than 'discipline-driven.' Thus, Parkland is a place where students, community organizers, labour, and business representatives come together with academics from diverse universities, disciplines, provinces and countries to use new approaches to explore public policy issues. This happens on Parkland's

Board of Directors and Research Advisory Committee as well as at Parkland colloquia, conferences and events.

This diversity is most evident in the make up of the Research Advisory Committee and the Board of Directors. Committee membership includes academics from across Alberta in business, economics, political science, sociology, law, and education. Parkland's research symposia, held as part of the research process in both the *Vision Alberta* and *Taming the Tempest: An Alternate Development Strategy for Alberta* projects, brought together the same mix of disciplines, with the addition of engineering and fine arts.

Parkland's research process is also often interdisciplinary in that the research advisors, writers, and peer reviewers often represent different disciplines. As an example, the recent report *Sustainable Healthcare for Seniors: Keeping it Public* was written by an economist, with an advisor from the Faculty of Nursing, and peer reviewers from economics and public health sciences. The advisory group was very community-based with representatives from health care and seniors advocacy groups, as well as academics.

Parkland is also a unique model of provincial and national cross-university collaboration. Board and research committee members represent a variety of academic institutions including: University of Alberta, Athabasca University, University of Lethbridge, Grant MacEwan College, University of Calgary, and Concordia University College of Alberta. The research process is often also provincial or national in its scope. For example, the health care report mentioned above, *Sustainable Health Care for Seniors* had an author from the University of Lethbridge and peer reviewers from the University of Toronto and the University of Alberta.

4.6 Research Synergies: The Neo Liberal Globalism and its Challengers Project

In 2000, Parkland Institute initiated the highly successful. \$1.9 million SSHRCC project "Neo Liberal Globalism and its Challengers: Reclaiming the Commons in the Semi-Periphery". The Globalism Project was totally independent from Parkland. But it was initiated by Gordon Laxer to fulfill the terms under which Parkland was set up by the Faculty of Arts. Arts gave seed funding for the first three years on the understanding that Parkland would apply for major SSHRC funding. The Globalism Project was the result.

The Project had its own research agenda, budget, staff and goals. Although Parkland does not claim credit for the very impressive publications record of the Globalism Project (see Appendix 11), our many points of intersection with the project provided us with many benefits. We have included a very brief discussion of the Globalism Project here because Parkland intends to apply for major grants from SSHRC and other agencies in the future. The Globalism Project demonstrated Parkland's ability to initiate and receive such research grants, and the benefits they can bring.

The Globalism Project and Parkland were both headed by Gordon Laxer, whose work with the Globalism project on decommodification strategies (*Not for Sale* book – 2006), critiques of progressive internationalist nationalisms in the context of globalism and U.S. hegemony

(*Globalisation and its Limits* book – 2003), and comparative energy security strategies, have informed much of his research work for Parkland Institute.

Parkland also benefitted from having the Globalism project housed within its offices, and from the unique role the institute played in disseminating the project's results to its constituency. The peer-review committee which conducted a site-visit of the Globalism project for SSHRCC highlighted these benefits in their February 2003 report:

“The main link [of the Globalism Project] to civil society is the Parkland Institute, itself a special institution, in that it has a board made up of university and community members. The success of the Parkland Institute in taking the university out into the community and bringing the community back into the university is impressive and seems to be well recognized in the university administration. We expect the Parkland Institute to play its role in disseminating results through the planned Neoliberal Globalism / Parkland conference in Edmonton in 2005. Equally important is the Neoliberal Globalism section in the Parkland Post, the 7,000 plus circulation thrice yearly publication edited by a Neoliberal Globalism, post-doctoral student”.

Some of the key collaborations between Parkland and the Globalism Project, and the benefits they provided to Parkland's ongoing work, are listed in various sections of this report.

5. STUDENTS AND POST DOCTORAL FELLOWS

Parkland does not have a faculty complement of its own. Its sole professor is Parkland's Director, who is seconded on a part time basis from a department in the university. Nor do we offer any courses or have any students. However, Parkland is a resource for students at all levels, providing knowledge, resources, research experience and training, and valuable capacity building. Many students attend Parkland colloquia and conferences and even volunteer at those events. In a more formal manner, Parkland engages students through internships and practicum placements. We clearly fulfill the *Dare to Discover* definition of discovery learning as learning that connects education to active, socially responsible citizenship.

In the past five years Parkland has had a total of 26 students in formal internship and research assistance positions. Parkland places a strong emphasis on experiential learning and community outreach with these placements at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

5.1 Undergraduate Students

Parkland engages with undergraduate students in a number of ways including contract research assistant positions, research volunteer intern placements, volunteer placements with and attendance at our conferences and events, and through guest lectures and the use of our materials in courses. Parkland has had a total of 33 formal undergraduate internship or practicum students as well as a large number of volunteers.

Internships

Parkland has had a total of 16 formal undergraduate internship or practicum students as well as a large number of volunteers in the past five years.

Parkland Institute regularly accepts student intern placements from the faculties of arts and education. These students have worked on a variety of projects including research support, conference organizing, event promotion, and most recently, the development of a student outreach strategy. Parkland's various undergraduate internship programs are listed below.

- Community Service Learning Program in the Faculty of Arts. A total of eight undergraduate students have been placed with us through this program in the last three years.
- Global Education Network Community Learning Program in the Faculty of Education. A total of seven students have been placed with Parkland.
- Parkland 2008. Research interns on Canadian Energy Security. One of these was filled by an undergraduate student.

Conferences and Events

Parkland has developed many successful strategies to maximize student participation and attendance at conferences and events.

- Conference volunteers, most of whom are students, receive free passes to the entire conference.
- Parkland has a standing agreement with the Alberta Public Interest Research Group (APIRG student group) whereby they fully cover registration fees of any undergraduate students wishing to attend the conference. In each of the last three years, APIRG offered 10 to 20 full student subsidies.
- Parkland has worked closely with professors in Sociology, Political Science, Human Ecology, and Education Policy Studies to have them include attendance at Parkland's fall conference in their course assignments. In the past five years, five different professors made use of this program which provides lower student registration fees.

5.2 Graduate Students

Parkland involves graduate students in our work through a variety of mechanisms including research assistant practicum and contract positions, *The Post* editorial position and other volunteer opportunities. Parkland has had a total of 17 such placements.

Research Assistants

Parkland has hired two graduate students to conduct research and assist with writing on various projects. Notably, Wayne Morgan, a graduate student in business gave valuable research assistance to two finance-related reports. Tera Spyce, a graduate student in rural sociology provided editing support on another.

Over the past five years, five graduate student research assistants have done research for Parkland projects under the supervision of Parkland Director Gordon Laxer. These include:

Goze Dogu (PhD. Sociology) provided research assistance on the *Spoils of the Boom* report.

Ashok Kumbamu (PhD. Sociology) calculated the impact of projected oil exports through the proposed Keystone Pipeline on the level of oil imports to Eastern Canada. This work was part of the evidence for the National Energy Board, in Gordon Laxer's submission as a formal intervenor.

Heather Jiang (PhD. Sociology) compared the economic downturn in Alberta with other oil jurisdictions to test the hypothesis, strongly held in Alberta, that Trudeau's National Energy Program, rather than lower international oil prices, caused Alberta's economic bust in the early 1980s.

Stephen Speake (PhD. Sociology) conducted research on Canadian oil imports from Algeria, and assessed the security of supply from that country.

Josée Johnston, (PhD. Sociology) was a founding member of Parkland. She acted briefly as its first administrator, and was the founding editor of *The Post*, a position she held for five years. As a graduate student, she also assisted with the proposal for the SSHRC Globalism Project. She made presentations to five Parkland conferences and edited several Parkland reports. She is now a professor at the University of Toronto.

Practicum Placements

Presently, Parkland has a masters student, Emilio Gagliardi, from Educational Psychology in a five month practicum placement. He is working on applied policy research and community linkages on two separate projects under the supervision of Diana Gibson.

From March to May 2008 Parkland had three graduate students in energy research intern positions under the supervision of Gordon Laxer. This internship program was established to generate new research and knowledge on various topics within Parkland's research on energy security for Canada.

For the 2008 fall conference, Parkland Institute also worked closely with the Global Education Network Graduate Students Association (GENGSA). Parkland created six student placements as conference facilitators which were filled by graduate students from the GENGSA. The Association also helped sponsor the conference's keynote address and promoted the conference to education students.

6. RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Parkland's research outcomes and impacts are very strong relative to its size. With no faculty specifically employed to do research, and no revenues from the university, Parkland published 33 opinion pieces in major newspapers, 18 reports, 2 books, 2 book chapters, and 2 occasional papers in the past five years. Parkland's publication record places it in the top group of think tanks in Canada.

6.1 Academic Comparators

The unique nature of Parkland Institute as both a university-based research institute and a public policy think-tank make it anomalous in terms of outcome measures. Parkland's mission is to develop and disseminate academic research to the broader public. Our evaluation measures include reports, books, book chapters, opinion pieces, and other notable outputs that indicate influence in public policy arenas.

Additionally, it is difficult to make quantified comparisons with other academic institutes. Parkland has no faculty members whose terms of reference specifically include doing research

for Parkland. Academic FTEs are the standard measure for comparison. Gordon Laxer, Parkland's Director, is a full-time, Political Economy professor.

Though quantitative comparisons are challenging, an examination of other public policy research institutes based at universities has been informative. We encountered other models of articulating with universities and new ideas around student engagement. Institutes examined include the Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy at the University of Regina, the Institute for Advanced Policy Research (IAPR) at the University of Calgary and the RBC Financial Group Economic Policy Research Institute at the University of Western Ontario. Academic centres surveyed in Alberta include the Canadian Circumpolar Institute and the Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research. Both are at the University of Alberta.

Ideas generated for consideration in Parkland's strategic plan by this survey include:

- the IAPR graduate course in public policy at the University of Calgary;
- the doctoral scholarship offered by RBC Financial Group at Western University; and
- the graduate student reading group at the Canadian Circumpolar Institute (University of Alberta).

Parkland plans to explore developing similar initiatives in future.

6.2 Public Policy Think Tank Performance Measures

Performance reports from public policy think tanks provide a solid set of indicators of output and effectiveness. Academic studies undertaking the quantitative assessment of think tank performance confirm these measures. Standard measures generally include the number of publications, broadly defined as books, book chapters, reports, opinion pieces and occasional papers.ⁱⁱ

Parkland chose to evaluate our outputs and impact in comparison with independent policy research institutes generally referred to as think tanks. The comparators chosen were selected based on having a common mission. Data for these comparators is based on the book by Donald Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*. He selected 31 national think tanks in Canada and ranked them on the basis of media hits as well as other impact measures such as appearance before federal government bodies.ⁱⁱⁱ Parkland was one of these institutes. Below we have selected six of the top seven for a detailed comparison with Parkland on the basis of revenues and staff complement. Information on mandate, budget, staff and publications were found in published annual reports for 2007. A brief description of each of the comparators chosen follows.

- **Pembina Institute** is a national environmental policy research and consulting organization based in Alberta. Its mission is to advance sustainable energy solutions through innovative research, education, consulting and advocacy.
- **Fraser Institute** is an independent international research and educational organization with offices in Canada and the United States. Through the exploration of issues that affect citizens, it attempts to discuss complex economic subjects in a manner that can be easily understood by everyone.
- **Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP)** is an independent, national, nonprofit organization. IRPP seeks to improve public policy in Canada by generating research, providing insight and sparking debate that will contribute to the public policy decision-

making process and strengthen the quality of the public policy decisions made by Canadian governments, citizens, institutions and organizations.

- **Canada West Foundation** is an independent research institute based in Alberta. Its mission is to be a leading source of strategic insight, conducting and communicating non-partisan economic and public policy research of importance to the four western provinces and all Canadians.
- **Canadian Centre for Policy Studies (BC Office)** is an independent, non-partisan research institute concerned with issues of social and economic justice in Canada. It has a national office in Ottawa and provincial offices in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. For this review, it was decided to focus on the BC office as it more comparable to the Parkland in size.
- **Conference Board of Canada** is a national independent, not-for-profit applied research organization. It builds leadership capacity for a better Canada by creating and sharing insights on economic trends, public policy and organizational performance.

Table 1 below shows how high Parkland’s output is compared to those selected public policy research institutes. Parkland is quite small in comparison, so budget and staff components are included for comparison purposes. Also, the last two rows prorate the data for Parkland’s budget and staff component to allow for a more accurate comparison.

Table 1 Think Tank 2007 Results

	Pembina	Fraser	IRPP	Canada West	Conf Board	CCPA BC	Parkland
Total Revenues (millions)	\$ 4.328	\$12.730	\$2.600	\$ 2.740	\$35.940	\$1.181	\$ 0.390
Total Staff (FTE)	51.75	n/a	24	19.5	n/a	9	4.5
Total Publications *	33	76	17	31	250	16	7
Published opinion pieces	30	280	69	26	n/a	12	11
Publications per \$100,000 rev.	0.76	0.60	0.65	1.13	0.70	1.35	1.79
Publications per FTE	0.64	n/a	0.71	1.59	n/a	1.78	1.56

* Publications include books, book chapters, reports, backgrounders and position papers.

Source: Annual reports.

7. QUALITY AND IMPACTS OF RESEARCH

Parkland performs very well in measures of quality and impact of its work. This section of the report will show how Parkland’s research measures high on public impact, and has influenced public debate and policy outcomes. Parkland Institute embodies the university’s vision, outlined in *Dare to Deliver*: “Foster scholarship and discoveries that are transformative and at the cutting edge by rewarding quality and impact over quantity...”

Peer-reviewed academic journal publications are standard measures for excellence in academic performance. They are insufficient for measuring excellence and impacts in public policy arenas.

An alternate set of indicators for excellence used by think tanks includes:

- a) citations of work by other academics in academic peer-reviewed journals;
- b) invited chapters in edited collections and research collaborations;
- c) recognition by citizens' organizations as indicated by invitations to speak and provide policy input;
- d) recognition by governments and politicians; and
- e) credibility with the media.

Measures of impact include media hits and impact on public policy formation.

7.1 Indicators of Excellence

Academic citations

Academic journal citations are an indicator that Parkland's work is being quoted and is contributing to scholarly debate. Parkland's work has been cited in scholarly journals a total of 153 times as of November 2008. A complete list of those citations is attached in Appendix 12. That includes 34 of Parkland's publications. Some publications were cited more than once. Parkland's books had particularly frequent referencing. For example, *Clear Answers* was cited 21 times, *Shredding the Public Interest* 22 times, *Writing off the Rural West* 14 times and *Contested Classrooms* 12 times.

Invitations for edited collections and research collaborations

In the past five years, Parkland has been invited to participate in a number of edited collections and collaborative research initiatives. This fall, David Bosold and Nikola Hynek, who are editing *Canada's Foreign and Security Policy: Soft and Hard Dimensions of a Middlepower* (Oxford University Press, 2010 forthcoming) approached Parkland's Director Gordon Laxer to write a chapter on 'Superpower, Middle Power or Satellite? Canadian Energy and Environmental Policy'. This adds to two book chapters already solicited from Parkland by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives including *Medicare: Facts, Myths, Problems, Promise* published by Lorimer press, and *Living with Uncle*, also published by Lorimer press.

Some notable recent invitations to collaborate in research include the Globalization and Health project based at the University of Ottawa, a University of Alberta SSHRC CURA proposal for Deliberative Democracy and Climate Change, led by David Kahane, and the Progressive Economics Forum panel entitled Hollowing out of Canada, which was part of the Canadian Economic Association annual meeting. Parkland has had to decline some other offers due to a lack of staff resources to support them.

Recognition by citizens' organizations

Parkland's research quality is such that community organizations in and beyond Alberta are seeking Parkland's perspective. This is shown by the record number of invitations to speak at provincial events organized by a broad range of groups from diverse perspectives (see Appendix 14). Parkland is also getting significant national recognition with invitations to national forums from groups such as the Canadian Society of Human Rights Associations, the Council of Canadians, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and Post-Carbon Toronto. Also, in recognition of her important work on energy policy, the Council of Canadians awarded Parkland's Research Director, Diana Gibson, their activist of the year award in 2008.

Recognition by governments and politicians

The importance of Parkland’s work has been recognized by governments and political leaders at federal and provincial levels. Notably, Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach says, “We appreciate the valuable contribution that Parkland Institute makes to our ongoing policy discussions for building a stronger Alberta.” See Appendix 13 for this letter and others recognizing Parkland’s contribution to policy forums and the value of the publications we send to relevant ministries. In the last five years, "Parkland Institute" has been named on the floor of the Alberta Legislative Assembly 50 times. In many of these cases, a report by Parkland was tabled in the Alberta Legislature, directly informing debate on issues such as the provincial budget. The table below shows this in a comparative context with the number of times Parkland and comparable think tanks have been named on the floor of the Alberta Legislature. The organizations’ total revenues have been included for a sense of size and comparability.

Table 2 Mentions on the Alberta Legislature floor 2003 to 2008

	Pembina	Canada West	Fraser Institute	Parkland
Budget	4,330,000	2,750,000	12,730,000	390,850
Named on the Floor	96	72	111	50

Source: Hansard key word search on December 8, 2008.

Credibility with media

Credibility with the media is another good indicator of the quality of the research being done by a public policy think tank. Parkland Institute has become a regular and oft-quoted source of information for print and broadcast media across the country (see section 7.2 for details on media hits). Parkland staff and researchers appear often on national and province-wide radio programs, and editorial pieces by Parkland’s researcherse are regularly published in Alberta’s major dailies and in publications like the Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star, and the Ottawa Citizen.

Additionally, Parkland is regularly invited to provide insight on CBC national programs such as *As it Happens* and *The Current*, and provincial ones such as *Wild Rose Forum*. Private broadcasters also regularly seek our commentary. Parkland staff was standing by in radio and television studios at the time of the provincial royalty policy announcements and also during budget debates. Parkland has also featured on the national news on topics such as the tar sands and climate change as well as on the national CBC program *On The Map*, hosted by Avi Lewis.

Finally, Parkland has featured in several documentary films that have been profiled internationally. One such documentary was made for Al Jazeera English international television on climate change and the tar sands. Another was *Tar Sands: The Selling of Alberta*, a major international documentary on the tar sands which featured interviews with Parkland’s Director and research director, and for which Parkland provided briefings. The documentary aired twice on CBC national television. Rights were sold to an international version in Japan and Norway, where the one hour production was also aired.

7.2 Measuring Impact of the Research

It is not only the outputs of the institute that matter, but the impact of those publications and events. As Marc Renaud, former President of SSHRC put it, the adage to ‘publish or perish’ is no longer sufficient. It is imperative to also ‘publicise or perish’. Parkland’s mission sets the framework for measuring the impact of our research, focussing on informing the public and motivating public engagement in policy dialogue and change.

Application of our resources by the public and community organizations is somewhat difficult to measure. Generally think tanks and those who study think tanks have settled on the measure of media hits as a proxy for public impact measurement. Other impacts that are important to capture include contributions to policy debate and contributions to policy change.

Other think tanks often report on website traffic and downloads as proxies for public use of their reports and materials. These are useful measures but Parkland has not included them here due to a lack of accurate data from our website. We are in the process of launching an updated website that will enable us to accurately capture website traffic data and we do plan to monitor and set targets for this in the future.

Media hits

Parkland’s work has a high impact relative to our size for both disseminating our work and informing the public. The breadth of our media profile is also extensive. Parkland research has been featured twice in the past year on the front page of Quebec’s leading French language newspaper *Le Devoir*, and as far afield as the *Houston Chronicle*, North Dakota’s *Grand Forks Herald*, the *Buffalo News* in Buffalo N.Y., and internationally in the *Guardian Weekly*, *The Telegraph*, and *Middle East Online*, all from the U.K., and on *Noticiasfinancieras.com*, a Latin American online news service.

Parkland compares particularly well with other think tanks on media hits. In fact, one of Canada’s foremost researchers on think tanks, Donald Abelson, places Parkland 13th out of the 31 top national think tanks for media impact.^{iv} In his study, Parkland places ahead of notable institutes such as the Canadian Council on Social Development, the Caledon Institute, the North South Institute, and the Economic Council of Canada. Abelson’s research does not control for budget or size of institute. Those institutes are many times the size of Parkland. Table three below illustrates that when controlled for budget size, Parkland stands out as one of the national leaders in impact in comparison with the leading national think tanks.

Please note that the CCPA national figures were used here as Don Abelson’s media hits data is only available for the national level. Also note that the figures are slightly skewed for organizations like the Parkland and CCPA whose mandate includes a strong focus on provincial media as Abelson’s methodology was a survey of key national papers including the Vancouver Sun, the Edmonton Journal and Calgary Herald, the Globe and Mail, the Ottawa Citizen and Toronto Star.

Table 3 Media Hits in 2000 to 2008

	Pembina	Fraser	IRPP	Canada West	Conf Board	CCPA	Parkland
Total Revenues (millions)	\$ 4.328	\$12.730	\$ 2.600	\$ 2.740	\$ 35.940	\$3.500	\$ 0.391
Total Staff (FTE)	51.75	n/a	24	19.5	n/a	30	4.5
Media Hits	1972	5547	1127	2045	5231	1386	417
Media Hits per \$100,000 rev.	45.56	43.57	43.35	74.62	14.55	39.60	106.69
Media hits per FTE	38.11	n/a	46.96	104.87	n/a	46.20	92.67

Source: Budget data is from published annual reports, staff data is from a phone survey and media hits are from Donald Abelson, *Do Think Tanks Matter, Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes*. Montreal, QC, CAN: McGill-Queen’s University Press, forthcoming publication.

Impact on policy debate and formation

Parkland Institute has been at the forefront of a number of critical policy debates in the province. For example, in health care, liquor store privatization, energy deregulation, and royalties, Parkland clearly set the tone for public debate.

In health care, Parkland's research has provided data that motivated citizens to speak out on policy related to private health care delivery and funding in both the Bill 11 and Third Way debates. Parkland's books, *Clear Answers* in 2000 and *The Bottom Line* in 2006 were both on bestseller lists in Alberta in the weeks leading up to major legislative initiatives and impacted directly on the outcomes of those legislative debates. These books and other health care research by Parkland continue to inform national debates on health care reform.

Parkland's study of liquor store privatization in Alberta, *Sobering Result: The Alberta Liquor Retailing Industry Ten Years after Privatization*, published in June 2003, has been informing public debate on the subject across the country since it was written. In the last five years, the study and author have been quoted extensively in media and on websites in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. Even in Alberta, five years later, the report is still in the news, having been quoted in the Calgary Herald in early November 2008, and with columnist Neil Waugh of the *Edmonton Sun* suggesting in 2007 that the predictions made by the study had come to pass.

Likewise, Parkland's research on electricity deregulation and the privatization of utilities since the late 1990s continues to inform public debate on the merits of public ownership versus privatization, and in particular has played an important role in informing recent public interventions in Edmonton as to whether the city should transfer significant public infrastructure assets to EPCOR or retain municipal control.

Also on the municipal front, Parkland Institute's research report *Greening the Fleet: National Trends and Opportunities for the City of Edmonton*, published during the municipal election in 2007, was instrumental in City Council's decision to launch a Green Fleet project and continues to inform the development of that project today.

Royalty policy is another area where Parkland's research has helped set the tone for the debate for ten years. Parkland's 1999 study, *Giving Away the Alberta Advantage: Are Albertan's receiving maximum revenue from our oil and gas?* established the use of Alaska and Norway as comparators for royalties in Alberta. In July 2004 the Pembina Institute used that study as a framework for their own study on royalties in Alberta. Parkland's analysis that the royalty structure was flawed and badly in need of modification was echoed by the Alberta government's own hand-picked review panel in 2007. Policy change has resulted from this ongoing debate and the royalty structure was reformed effective January 2009.

8. UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

The university academic plan, *Dare to Deliver*, defines a clear commitment to "community engagement near and far." More specifically, one of the goals is to "foster excellent relationships with Capital Health, the Alberta Cancer Board, and other provincial health organizations, the

post-secondary sector, the public sector, and non-governmental organizations to further enhance the quality of life in our society.” This is Parkland’s core mission.

Parkland’s mission is to bridge the divide between the academic and other communities through its publications, speaker tours, media pieces, and conferences. Parkland reaches parts of the community that are not often reached by the university. Our knowledge and activities reach well beyond traditional academic audiences. In doing so Parkland promotes the aspiration of this university to bond with and to serve our communities and to contribute to the quality of citizenship within them.

Parkland distributes 6,000 copies of its publication *The Post* around the province three times a year, and hosts regular speaking events in Alberta’s larger cities and rural communities. Parkland staff and researchers are also regular presenters and panel members at major events organized by other organizations around the country. This includes presentations to a broad variety of community, activist and church groups. In the last two calendar years alone (2007 and 2008) Parkland’s executive director, research director and Director have spoken to a combined total of over 11,000 people (a full listing of these activities is provided in Appendix 14).

The conferences, speakers series, and other events contribute not only to community engagement, but also to fostering academic debate amongst scholars and students on campus. Many of Parkland’s conferences and colloquia have brought internationally recognized academics, and leading intellectuals to the University of Alberta campus. These events contribute to engaging students and scholars and the broader public in open and critical dialogues on pressing political and social issues facing Canada and the World.

The following section breaks down some of the Parkland’s accomplishments in these areas into more detail.

8.1 Participating in and Hosting Forums

Speakers series

For every report or book released by Parkland there is a dissemination plan (see attached dissemination guidelines in Appendix 15). Generally each report release is accompanied by a public event at the University of Alberta and a speaking tour of other centres around the province. This creates valuable opportunities on the University of Alberta campus for Parkland’s recognized authors to share their research with students and scholars and to engage in dialogue. Events in rural areas help to offer opportunities for students and faculty in local colleges to engage as well as building connections with local community organizations.

In addition to Parkland’s report and book launches, Parkland hosts an annual speakers series, inviting high profile and cutting edge thinkers, writers and activists from Alberta, elsewhere in Canada, and abroad. Some examples of special guests invited include: Canadian unionist and author Jean-Claude Parrot, leading Canadian geologist David Hughes, and Chilean journalist Patricia Verdugo (see Appendix 16 for a complete list).

Beginning in 2007, the Parkland Institute has also co-hosted a spring speakers series in conjunction with the Community Service-Learning’s Oil and Community spring immersion program. The series is carried out over five weeks, and members of the community at large are

invited to join students from the class in listening to presentations by leading researchers and activists in the area of Alberta's oil developments and their impact on communities. Parkland Institute's executive director was a member of the steering committee tasked with the original design of the immersion program, and Parkland continues to co-sponsor and organize the annual speakers series.

Conferences

Over 6000 people from both the academic and broader community have attended Parkland conferences in the past five years. This includes Parkland's annual conference as well as other conferences hosted or co-hosted by the institute.

Since its inception in 1997, Parkland has held annual conferences on cutting edge and policy relevant topics. The conferences are oriented towards community engagement, offering sessions on current, applied and policy relevant research in accessible language. Conference speakers are always a blend of academics, leading intellectuals and community leaders and recognized national and international experts on the topic, often on joint panels. These conferences bring on average 700 people together on campus each year (attendance has ranged from 400 to 1000), many of whom are not otherwise associated with the university. Attached is a summary of the conference titles for the last five years (See Appendix 17).

In addition to the annual conference, Parkland regularly hosts other conferences, often in collaboration with other organizations. For example, in fall 2007 Parkland and the Alberta Federation of Labour hosted the conference *Treading Water: Workers, Wages and the Boom*, and in February of 2007 Parkland co-hosted a conference on globalization and health with the University of Ottawa titled *Forgotten Families: Globalization and the Health of Canadians*. In May 2006 Parkland co-sponsored the John Humphrey Centre's public symposium entitled *A More Democratic Alberta: How Do We Get There?* The symposium resulted in a published report and a task force which continues to carry the work forward. In 2005 there were two such conferences. The first, a conference in Edmonton titled *An Earth Out of Water* was co-hosted with Change for Children Association, and the second, *Resisting the Empire: Challenges to US Power*, was organized in conjunction with the SSHRCC funded Globalism Project.

Symposia

Parkland has held at least one annual research symposium since 2004. These forums bring academic, community and business researchers together to focus for one-half day to two days on a specific policy problem. The results of these symposia are often used as the basis for a research publication.

In 2004 there were two such symposia. The first was *Setting the Agenda*, held in Calgary, Alberta, to begin the process of outlining a research agenda on the political economy of water. These two days of discussion and sharing of information and knowledge were made possible by a contribution from the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation. The second was *Envisioning Alberta*, held in Edmonton in the midst of the provincial election.

In 2005 Parkland hosted a national symposium on Canadian energy security policy in Calgary for a full day. This symposium was used as the basis for Parkland's publication *Toward an Energy Security Strategy for Canada: A Discussion Paper*. In 2006 and 2007 Parkland hosted research

forums on industrial and economic policy which formed the basis of the report *Taming the Tempest: An Alternate Development Strategy for Alberta*.

Parkland's staff and researchers are also regularly invited to participate in workshops, symposia and panels organized by other U of A academics, institutes and research projects. Parkland was an active participant in a cutting edge Deliberative Democracy and Climate Change workshop organized in September 2008 by the U of A's David Kahane and featuring political, indigenous, and thought leaders from around the country. That workshop has since resulted in the drafting of a letter of intent to SSHRCC for a Community University Research Alliance grant for which Parkland Institute will serve as a key partner.

In May 2007 Parkland Institute was invited to send a researcher to the Running Out of Steam conference organized by the U of A's Environmental Research and Studies Centre and the U of T's Munk Centre. Parkland Institute has also played an important role as a presenter, discussant and panellist in events organized by the U of A International Centre, the Department of Education Policy Studies, the Department of Human Ecology, and the departments of Sociology and Political Science. Staff have also participated in academic workshops and symposia at the University of Calgary, University of Lethbridge, Red Deer College, Medicine Hat College, and Grant MacEwan.

8.2 Hosting, Co-hosting or Participating in Events

In March 2004, Parkland hosted the Edmonton stop of the Council of Canadians' tour entitled Colony or Country? The Future of Canada – US relations, featuring Maude Barlow, Murray Dobbin, and Gordon Laxer. The following month, we hosted screenings of the film *Waiting for Martin* with guest speaker Dave Bernans in Edmonton, Red Deer and Calgary. In November, Parkland was invited to co-host the Edmonton and Calgary premier screenings of the film *The Take* with filmmaker Avi Lewis hosting a discussion session afterward.

Parkland commissioned the production of *Damned, Drained and Hosed* on the politics of water by local sketch comedy troupe Three Dead Trolls in a Baggie, and then sponsored it to tour to Lethbridge, Red Deer, St. Paul, Edmonton and Calgary. Events in Edmonton and Calgary included presentations by CODCO founder Greg Malone, and the Red Deer event included world-renowned water expert Dr. David Schindler.

In 2006 we co-sponsored a public presentation at the U of A by award-winning author Edwin Black, who spoke about his new book *Internal Combustion: How Corporations and Governments Addicted the World to Oil and Derailed the Alternatives*. Another one of the highlights of that programming year was being invited by the David Suzuki Foundation to host the Edmonton stop on Dr. Suzuki's national If I Were Prime Minister tour. A sold-out crowd gathered at the U of A to hear Dr. Suzuki's urgent call for action and political mobilization on environmental issues.

In May 2007, Gordon Laxer was invited to appear as an expert witness before the House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade to speak about energy security and the Security and Prosperity Partnership.

In May 2007, Parkland co-sponsored the Edmonton and Calgary stops on Linda McQuaig's cross-Canada tour promoting her new book *Holding the Bully's Coat: Canada and the U.S. Empire*. That same year Parkland co-sponsored a panel discussion in Calgary entitled Whose Boom, the Edmonton stop on Naomi Klein's tour of her new book *The Shock Doctrine*, at which Parkland's executive director was invited on-stage by Naomi Klein to speak to her book in the Alberta context, a speaking event at the Uof A with Dr. Kevin Danaher, and numerous others.

These events enrich the experience of University of Alberta staff and students and foster interdisciplinary discourse and collaboration. They also extend the University's community engagement with civic organizations.

8.3 Schools Program

Parkland Institute's ongoing schools program reaches hundreds of high school and postsecondary students across the province through presentations on issues of citizenship, globalization, democracy, the Kyoto accord, and the mass media. Parkland also reaches hundreds of teachers annually through presentations at conventions, conferences and professional development days, and through a regular column in the *ATA Magazine*. The value of this work can be seen in the number of volunteers and event attendees who cite their first point of contact with Parkland Institute as a classroom presentation by a Parkland staffer, or as a teacher using a Parkland resource in the classroom.

8.4 Public Engagement through Media

Parkland Institute has put in place a number of communications initiatives designed to maximize the degree to which we are able to engage with the community at large, and the ways in which the media can learn about the Parkland Institute and apply the outcomes of our research and programs.

The Post is a broad-sheet published by Parkland three times a year as a way of disseminating our research outcomes and further encouraging engagement with the multitude of local, national and international issues of concern to our members, supporters and the public. Parkland produces 6,000 copies of *The Post* three times a year and distributes them in a variety of ways around the province. Articles are written by Parkland staff, academic researchers, and volunteers on a variety of topics that are of interest to the publication's readers.

Parkland Institute also maintains a website which is broadly accessed by the public, media, students and academics from around the country. All Parkland Institute research publications and opinion pieces are posted on the web-site for free download, and notices of upcoming events are also prominently displayed on the site. Parkland has also begun posting digital audio for all sessions at our annual conference and speakers' series as a way of enabling those people who cannot attend these events to benefit from the speakers at their convenience. The Parkland Institute website currently receives an average of 2,500 visits per month.

Parkland is also engaging with students and the public at large through internet based social networking. Since September 2007 we have had a presence on the social networking site Facebook. This presence takes the form of a "group page" on the site, which currently has over 330 members/subscribers and continues to grow. This Facebook group echoes the activities and

news of the Parkland Institute's web-site and e-mail distribution list. A recent scan determined that 2/3 of the members in this group were not previously being reached by the Parkland Institute in any way. The group includes a demographic that is much younger than our traditional demographic, and also a large number of students. As with any social networking site, there is a tremendous multiplier effect to all of our communications on Facebook.

Parkland is currently in the midst of a complete re-design of its website, which will allow, among other things, being better able to take advantage of other forms of new media. The new site will also enable Parkland to better track web-hits and numbers of downloads of our resources.

The site developed for the 2008 fall conference included several innovations. The site provided links for visitors so they could access previous speeches and presentations by conference speakers as a form of preview, and the site also included a blog. This blog provided an opportunity for volunteer bloggers to post stories related to the conference theme and speakers in the lead-up to the conference. Parkland also recruited a group of volunteer bloggers who were charged with blogging about their impressions of the conference, their reaction to speakers, and some of the conversations they had with participants, while the conference was still going on. By 9:00 am on the day following the conference, the audio for the keynote and plenary presentations had already been posted to the site, and within a week all of the conference audio was on the site. This made it possible for those people who could not attend the conference to hear the speeches and read people's reactions to them almost immediately.

8.5 Rural Outreach

Although most of Parkland Institute's activities and programs take place in Edmonton and Calgary, we have strived to ensure that people outside of these two cities also have access to our programs, research and speakers. In the last five years we have hosted speakers events in Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, St. Paul, Camrose, Red Deer, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. In addition, Parkland speakers and researchers have presented at events in Lloydminster, Edson, Hinton, Lacombe, and Stettler. Likewise, *The Post* is mailed regularly to over two hundred people outside of Edmonton and Calgary, and is also distributed through small town union halls and public libraries. In these ways, Parkland is able to reach out to thousands of Albertans a year who live outside of Alberta's two major cities.

These activities clearly align with several of the goals of *Dare to Deliver*, including enriching the graduate and undergraduate student experience and promoting rural and urban engagement.

8.6 Parkland's Role in Fostering Academic Debate

The object of scholarship is not just to publish, but also to foster academic and public exchange. Parkland fosters open and critical debate about research questions and findings. Dialoguing with the public broadens research beyond 'discipline-driven' questions, to also include 'society-driven' questions. The dialogical approach makes for more broadly-conceived and higher quality research, as well as better informed Albertan and Canadian citizens, the foundation for democracy.

Openness, debate and critical analysis are key to Parkland's role in fostering academic and public debates. To this end, Parkland consistently hosts events with representatives of divergent

perspectives. In this way, Parkland fulfills the *Dare to Discover* vision of promoting “integrity, fairness, and principles of ethical conduct built on the foundation of academic freedom, open inquiry, and the pursuit of truth.”

For example, Parkland’s researchers have participated in forums such as CBC’s Friday Scrum, and CBC’s Wild Rose Forum (a daily, province-wide discussion of public affairs) and debated John Manley, former Deputy Prime Minister on CBC’s the Current. Parkland was also a key guest in a live, televised debate, hosted by CBC at the provincial museum, with Alberta Minister David Hancock, David Yager, the director of the Petroleum Services Association of Canada (PSAC), and Al Hyndman, principal at Consultant Magnus Limited. Parkland has hosted debates at our annual conferences, inviting speakers from the main, provincial and federal political parties, as well as the Fraser Institute. Examples of past speakers include: Tom Flanagan, former chief of staff of the federal Conservative Party, Ted Byfield, former publisher of *Alberta Report*, and Roger Gibbins, president of the Canada West Foundation.

By conducting research that questions the status quo and conventional models, Parkland provides a research perspective and body of knowledge that complements other research conducted on campus. Parkland’s role is critical to ensuring that the University of Alberta is a place of independent scholarship, with a multiplicity of perspectives and voices on policy issues. As the University’s new Chancellor, Linda Hughes said in her inaugural convocation address, this freedom to explore ideas embodies the University of Alberta’s motto, ‘Whatsoever Things are True.’

9. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Parkland Institute operates on an April to March budget year. Parkland’s financial books are managed and maintained within the university’s Peoplesoft infrastructure. The institute maintains a database which interacts with the university’s Peoplesoft system to facilitate deposits, data entry and internal reporting. A full financial report for the 2007-2008 fiscal year, as well as the organizational budget for the 2008-2009 fiscal year are attached as Appendix 18.

9.1 Revenue

In the 2007/2008 fiscal year, Parkland’s revenue break-down was as follows:

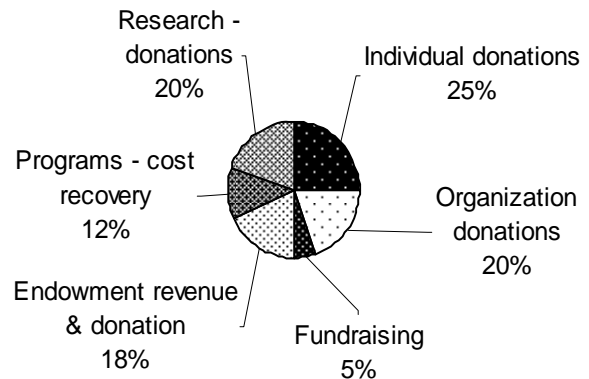
Individual Donations	97,207
Organizational Donations	77,194
Fundraising Revenue	19,556
Endowment Revenue / Donation	71,951
Programming Revenue	47,489
Research Donations	77,451
Total Revenue	390,848

Parkland’s goal in any given budget year is to break down its revenue in the following ratios by source: 1/3 from individual donors; 1/3 from organizational donors (includes unions, professional associations, non-profits, and small businesses); and 1/3 from fundraising, endowment and cost-

recovery at events. Though the exact numbers vary from year to year, Parkland has been able to come reasonably close to this target in each of the last five years.

Although Parkland receives no core financial support from the University of Alberta or the Faculty of Arts, we do receive important in-kind and service support from both. This includes our physical base of operations, the ability to purchase course releases for Parkland’s director, and access to the university’s financial and administrative infrastructure. In the past we have also received funding support from the University Conference Fund, from the Faculty of Arts, and various departments for our annual fall conference. This support has never been guaranteed, and is requested on an annual basis. Thus, our funding base varies from year to year. The Conference Fund has not provided funding in the last few years, claiming that the fund was never meant to support annual or ongoing events.

Parkland Revenue Sources - 2007-2008

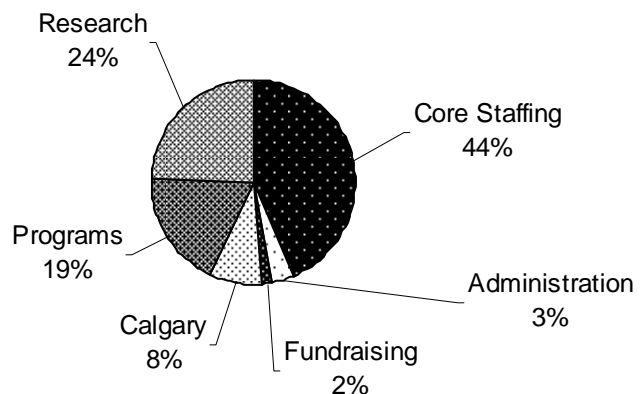


9.2 Expenditures

Organizational expenditures have likewise grown in the past five years from a total of \$248, 920 in 2003/2004 to approximately \$365,000 in 2007/2008. Parkland’s expense breakdown for the 2007/2008 fiscal year was as follows:

Core Staffing	159,361
Administrative Expenses	11,856
Fundraising Expenses	6,257
Calgary Expenses	30,596
Programming Expenses	67,941
Research Expenses	88,773
 Total Expenditure	 364,784

Parkland Expenses - 2007-2008



9.3 Endowment

In December 2004 the Parkland Institute launched our endowment with a donation of \$1 million from an anonymous donor. In 2007, Parkland received \$68,000 from the Woodsworth-Irvine Socialist Fellowship, which has allowed the institute to re-capitalize its existing endowment significantly. As of September 30, 2008 the principal balance in the endowment had grown by over \$69,000.

The endowment has benefited Parkland tremendously by providing guaranteed monthly revenues. This amount, approximately \$4,000 per month, has provided an important source of core operating funds for Parkland. Although all endowments are temporarily negatively impacted by the current economic turbulence, we expect that once they stabilize, the endowment will once again ensure that Parkland can meet core administrative commitments without running deficits, even in months when donations slow a bit.

The endowment also provides a solid base that we can leverage as we seek to encourage other potential major donors to add to it. One of Parkland's fundraising goals is to triple the size of the existing endowment over the next five years as a way to increase and secure its research capacity.

9.4 Fund Development

Parkland Institute's approach to fund development over the past five years has focused on three key areas:

- moving existing donors up the ladder of giving and toward pre-approved monthly giving plans;
- ensuring that the levels of annual contributions by existing organizational donors keep pace at minimum with the pace of inflation in the province; and
- working with leadership at the U of A Development Office to identify and nurture potential major donors.

These focus areas have yielded positive results in terms of maintaining Parkland's core level of operations with moderate growth in staffing and significant growth in impact over the past five years.

Out of some 750 individual donors in the 2007/2008 fiscal year, 196 were on a monthly giving plan, 334 donated more than \$120 over the course of the year, and 38 donated more than \$500 each. Parkland's success in being able to move occasional donors to monthly giving plans has resulted in a much more predictable and secure revenue stream than it would have otherwise. Currently, the organization receives approximately \$3,200 per month by way of monthly giving plans—this amount has grown by 10 to 15 percent in each of the last five years.

In September 2008 the Parkland Institute increased its staff component by .5 FTE in order to focus more strategically on fund development and growing our donor base. The extra half-time position has been allocated to our Calgary office, where the institute has identified a tremendous potential for growth in support, both in terms of number of donors and in terms of potential major donors. This potential will be actualized in the following ways:

- display tables and presentations at public events designed to collect names and contact information of potential supporters;
- follow-up with potential donors by mail and through face-to-face meetings;
- invitation to informational meetings specifically designed to interest new people in becoming contributors to Parkland;
- specific follow-up and nurturing of relationships with potential major donors identified through this process; and
- working to triple the size of our existing endowment over the next five years.

The new fund-development position has also been having face-to-face meetings with potential new organizational donors, particularly Calgary based union locals, church groups, and community groups, as a way of increasing our level of support from those constituencies as well.

By focusing on our strengths and our successful fund development strategies of the past five years, Parkland is well positioned to continue to grow its revenue stream in a concerted and predictable manner over the next five years. This will ensure that the organization is able to continue funding its ongoing work while continuing to expand its size, scope, and impact in a responsible manner.

10. PHYSICAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1 Human Resources

Parkland Institute's organizational structure both contributes to and reflects its dual role as an academic research institute and a community think tank. Ultimate responsibility for the organization rests with the Dean of Arts at the University of Alberta, who appoints the Director to oversee and direct Parkland's work. Parkland's organizational chart is attached in Appendix 1 and job descriptions for all staff positions are attached in Appendix 19.

The Director is a tenured professor, normally in the Faculty of Arts, and is considered by the university as the trustholder for the academic unit. Parkland Institute purchases two, single-term course releases for the Director from his or her home department to enable him or her to carry out Parkland duties. The current Director is Gordon Laxer from the Department of Sociology (see Appendix 20a for Dr. Laxer's full CV).

The Director works closely with the Board of Directors and the dean's representative to Parkland to provide general oversight and direction to all aspects of Parkland's work. The director, together with the Executive Committee of the Board, is responsible for hiring and supervising the two academic trust positions at Parkland Institute: the executive director and the research director. The director is a key spokesperson for the organization.

The executive director is responsible for the overall management of the organization, including budgeting, reporting, and the supervision of the institute's 2.5 non-academic staff. He is also responsible for the institute's communications and outreach strategies, and acts as a spokesperson to the media and the community at large. Ricardo Acuña is the current executive director (see Appendix 20.b for a detailed professional bio).

The research director is responsible for the overall management of the organization's research program, including budgeting for specific research projects, contracting and supervising contract researchers, and overseeing the academic peer review of all of Parkland's research publications. She also supervises student and volunteer researchers, and acts as a spokesperson to the media and community on behalf of our research program. Diana Gibson is the current research director and her CV is attached in Appendix 20.c.

The director, executive director, and research director work closely together to provide the strategic leadership of the organization.

Parkland also has:

- a full-time administration and programs coordinator, who is responsible for the day-to-day administrative tasks in the office, reception, and the coordination of all of Parkland's public programming including the annual conference, speakers series, and one-off speaking events;
- a full-time southern Alberta outreach and fund development coordinator, who staffs Parkland's Calgary office, and is responsible for coordinating all outreach, programming and promotion activities in Calgary, and has assumed responsibility for the institute's new fund development program; and
- a half-time administrative assistant who provides administrative support to all of the staff in the organization, particularly to the administration and programs coordinator.

Organizational roles and accountability are clearly laid out in the attached organizational chart, and the breakdown of primary and secondary areas of responsibility are spelled out on the attached spread sheet (see Appendix 21). Given the small office staff and the level of activity and output at Parkland, many of the boundaries between positions are often fluid with staff filling in where needed as needed for the sake of getting projects completed on time. This sense of mutual support contributes well to the camaraderie that exists at Parkland and ensures a healthy and active communication system.

In addition to the core staff complement, Parkland Institute contracts out key functions like graphic design and copy-editing on an as needed basis. The role of editing *The Post* is contracted out to a local journalist who has a background with both Parkland and the university.

Although this human resources structure and complement serves Parkland Institute well, there is always the challenge of having more work to do than there is staff or time to do it. In particular, in recent years, increased programming, profile and research output have placed increasing demands on the research, communications, and promotion functions at Parkland Institute. Priority areas for human resource growth at Parkland include increased research capacity and a dedicated communications/promotions assistant.

10.2 Physical Space and Resources

Parkland's physical location facilitates our dual mandate within the academy and the community. The Parkland house is clearly located on the U of A campus, but its stand-alone nature and direct access from the street make it a welcoming place for non-academic community members who are sometimes intimidated by university-based offices.

The physical space at the Parkland House currently serves our needs well, with individual offices for the executive director and the research director, and an office / reception area for the admin and programs coordinator. The existence of a small board room also works well for planning meetings, committee meetings, and social gatherings.

In Calgary the Parkland Institute rents half an office in the basement of Parkdale United Church, where numerous other community organizations have office space. This office provides good value and the necessary communications infrastructure to fulfill the needs of the Calgary position. The proximity to other community organizations, and the ample meeting and gathering spaces, also serve the needs of Parkland Institute well.

Given the province-wide nature of the Parkland Institute and, in particular, the Board of Directors, board meetings can be quite challenging. Parkland attempts to have at least one in-person board meeting per year, with the remainder being done by video conference. Because the cost to us of accessing the U of A's video conference facilities is prohibitive, we hold our meetings in the University of Calgary School of Social Work, who provide us with free access to their facilities.

There are, however, also some challenges in terms of our current physical space. In the Parkland House, the administrative assistant currently has her work-station inside the board room, which results in work disruptions for her whenever meetings take place. We also have an empty office on the second floor of the house which is largely un-usable as a result of extensive humidity damage on the walls and ceiling. These limitations mean that, as the Parkland Institute staff contingent grows, we will quickly out-grow our existing physical space.

Parkland Institute has been able to upgrade all of its computers and office equipment on a rotating basis and currently no staff person is working on a computer that is more than three years old. Parkland Institute purchases internet access from local provider Shaw Cable, because the university's internet service infrastructure does not reach into the Old Garneau neighbourhood where we are physically located. This, of course, has cost implications for Parkland, but our internet service does meet our existing needs well. Our Calgary staff person is also able to access the main Parkland computer and database by way of remote desktop, which enables us to effectively manage data and electronic resources between the two offices. Likewise, the Calgary office has been set up with a Skype account in order to facilitate communications with the Edmonton office and also serves as an inexpensive long-distance plan.

11. CONCLUSIONS AND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Parkland has established the ambitious goal of doubling the outputs and impacts of the organization in the next five years. As indicated by the media profile and recognition by civil society, Parkland is a leading national think tank. The quantity, quality and impact of Parkland's work are very high, especially for such a small centre.

As this report has documented, over the past five years, the institute has emerged as a provincial and national leader in public policy research, especially in the areas of health care, energy policy and public finance. While being financially strong and independent, we have:

- published transformative high quality peer reviewed research that has changed the boundaries of multiple disciplines and increased the university's profile provincially and nationally;
- built bridges between the university and communities around the province as well as nationally and internationally;
- impacted on public policy debate through regular media commentary, government submissions and public events;

- enriched the university learning experience for students in practicum and research internships as well as through classroom involvement;
- stimulated a cross-fertilization between scholarly and public debate through conferences, colloquia and events;
- strengthened and expanded a valuable research network that is interdisciplinary, regionally diverse, and includes a multiplicity of institutes and civil society organizations; and
- increased our financial independence and sustainability through launching and growing our endowment, and by increasing our core fundraising base by 46%.

This momentum has allowed Parkland to make significant contributions to a number of areas of the university's academic plan, especially on the cornerstone of community engagement near and far. Parkland has demonstrated the ability to grow while maintaining both the quality and the impact of our research.

Parkland is committed to continuing on this growth trajectory. The attached draft strategic plan (Appendix 2) will form the basis of board and Research Advisory Committee planning for the coming five years. It has ambitious goals for growth in research outputs and impacts, accompanied by a solid fundraising strategy that includes more than doubling our endowment and applying for a large multi-year research grant.

This growth will not be without its challenges. The institute will see fundraising opportunities decline as the economic picture changes. Also, staff resources and administrative infrastructure are already stretched too thin. To achieve our goals, the following resources will be needed.

Hire additional research staff. The report has already indicated Parkland's need for a second research desk to adequately cover the multiple research specializations on which the institute has developed a public policy leadership role.

On the administrative side, additional fundraising and communications capacity is much needed. The infrastructure is not currently in place to accomplish the ambitious goals the institute has for fundraising.

The office space is presently limited and the offices will need repairs and improvements to allow for the growth planned.

Finally, Parkland needs to address succession planning for the Director position. Gordon Laxer, plans to retire at the end of December 2013. A replacement needs to be identified. The attached succession planning document outlines activities to date and those planned in this respect (see Appendix 22).

In summary, over the next five years, we envision that the Parkland Institute will continue to be a leader in public policy debate on the provincial and national stages and we plan to double our outputs and impact. Parkland will continue to act as a resource to public actors engaged in policy debate and formation and build bridges between the university and civil society to ensure that

excellent academic research is also applied and used for transformation, for the betterment of society as a whole.

ⁱ Evan Osenton, 'The Greatest decade for Alberta writing'. Alberta Views Magazine, Jan-Feb 2008, p. 47.

ii Abelson, Donald E. Do Think Tanks Matter? Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes. Montreal, QC, CAN: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/albertacel/Doc?id=10119946&ppg=102>.

iii The focus here is on media hits as other measures of involvement used by Don Abelson such as federal government engagement are not accurate measures for Parkland, whose work focuses mainly on provincial policy.

iv Donald Abelson, Do Think Tanks Matter, Assessing the Impact of Public Policy Institutes. Montreal, QC, CAN: McGill-Queen's University Press, forthcoming publication.