

COMMUNITY NOTE

The Knowledge Management Landscape: reflections of the journey to nowhere, somewhere, anywhere, everywhere. Walking, talking and working with no-one, someone, anyone and everyone

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Abstract

This community note describes the process of the Knowledge Management (KM) Landscape, an open, collaborative project to map the landscape of knowledge management which took place over period 24 January-11 July 2025. The path walked was collectively explored and determined, with each co-creative session realising the next incremental step towards capturing more of the KM Landscape in a terms list. From the start we acknowledged its limitations: that it may fail as a concept, that it could never be complete in the envisioned timeframe and that it was inherently exclusive, whilst having the exact opposite, inclusive, intent. The KM Landscape project was by its nature, impulsive, non-conforming and unconventional in trying to embrace voices from inside, at the perimeter and outside of knowledge management. It included seasoned and new voices.

Keywords: knowledge management; mapping; projects; collaboration; terminologies

1 Introduction

It all started with a thought and then simple question: 'can we do knowledge management (KM) for knowledge managers (KMers) better.' The question started a conversation, and the conversation led to a co-creative activity: the KM Landscape @ 2025 project. This article is a thank you for all those who supported, those who got involved and had their voice heard and those who listened.

The KM Landscape first and foremost is nothing new: it takes ideas, concepts, approaches from the many disciplines, explorers and practitioners that make up KM as it is today, in all of the many ways these are and have been expressed. The result was for me something very human, a touch of humanity, inclusiveness, giving an opportunity for a voice of diverse expression on and around the subject of

knowledge and knowledge management. So, for this interest, and the showing up, I am thankful to have been part of what for me was a unique moment in time which included individuals connecting from around the world. These individuals had many different reasons to join the initiative – and by walking, talking and working together, they established a co-creative energy with a single purpose: to establish a list of terms to represent the KM Landscape @ 2025.

The path walked was collectively explored and determined, with each co-creative session realising the next incremental step towards capturing more of the KM Landscape in a terms list. From the start we acknowledged its limitations: that it may fail as a concept, that it could never be complete in the envisioned timeframe and that it was inherently exclusive, whilst having the exact opposite,

inclusive, intent. The KM Landscape project was by its nature, impulsive, non-conformative and unconventional in trying to embrace voices from inside, at the perimeter and outside of knowledge management. It included seasoned and new voices, those inside KM looking out and those outside looking in.

In my own limited and biased way, I offer this reflection on the KM Landscape to allow and promote other reflections, perspectives and opinions on this project being more easily expressed and accommodated in future (KM Landscape) co-creation.

2 Explaining the title of the article

Nowhere: The KM Landscape did not set a path, the path evolved as each co-creative meeting occurred. As such the KM Landscape was literally 'going nowhere' (in particular).

Somewhere: The intent of the KM Landscape was to create a set of terms lists that would form a basis or foundation for future work or application. The KM Landscape also adopted the Thematic of 'KM4free' – so it intended to create open source (creative commons) resources.

Anywhere: The path was set through the co-creative process itself and each session could potentially steer the path in any direction, dependent upon the co-creative inputs.

Everywhere: We chose a format that would allow an exploration of the entire KM Landscape, so the exploration was open to explorations in every direction. This included same terms with different meanings, and different terms with same meanings.

No-one: The KM Landscape did not target any particular group or function within and at the perimeter of the knowledge management discipline. So no-one (in particular) was seen as representing a more important or relevant perspective than anyone else.

Someone: The KM Landscape needed to involve people (i.e., multiple people) in order to embrace these diverse perspectives to make for dynamic cocreation.

Anyone: The self-proposal for participation (done through an on-line form) allowed for anyone to sign up and whilst each submission gave some indication of their KM role and

expectations of the KM Landscape activity – there were no selection criteria – so anyone who signed up was sent the meeting invitation to participate.

Everyone: By having communication outreach to a high number of communities of practice and representative bodies and being launched as a recognised activity by the Knowledge Management Global Network it was intended that everyone active in KM would have an opportunity to find out about and join the KM Landscape project.

3 The context

It should be no surprise that in an article relating to knowledge management that we start with context. Indeed, context may be the most important consideration – particularly when we apply knowledge management (theory) to a particular situation as a solution to creating practical change or desired impact.

When initially forming the KM Landscape concept, the context of knowledge management was gathered by talking with stakeholders throughout the knowledge management 'ecosystem',¹ mostly through those visible, network introductions, leaders of communities and others representative bodies. This gathered context was then refined to establish a better understanding of where KM had come from, where it was at present and also looking forward to where it was headed. This then led to looking at the concept of: '*How has, how is and how could KM evolve.*'

In these conversations an effort was made to figure out KM Landscape's possible place relative to the current KM ecosystem and significant entities, resources, activities or opinions – looking for and reducing possible duplication and redundancy. There seemed to be general agreement that:

- There are many possible answers to KM questions with few places to accommodate differing views and methods. There are few common places for enabling inclusion
- KM is mature and it matters, and yet KM is not where it deserves to be. We need to show what's out there with neither alignment nor critique.
- @ 2025, a quarter of the way through this century and 30 years on from KM beginnings, we (KMers) are struggling with KM basics.

In terms of world context (end of 2024 and early 2025), something that cannot go unmentioned or be ignored, was

the huge perturbation caused through the withdrawal of funding for overseas aid, and the impact on knowledge in this key humanitarian discipline and undertaking. Whilst there is no evidence of a relationship between this and KM Landscape sign-up / participation, the response to the KM Landscape was seemingly unprecedentedly high, and also the participation unusually high for such a group active in knowledge management (normally around 10% of those signing up participating – whilst for the KM Landscape it was consistently around 30%).

Last and not least in the context of the preparation of the KM Landscape is the involvement of the Knowledge Management Global Network (KMGN). Providing network contacts, a sane sounding board and also supporting the establishment of the activity, the KMGN's initial role and influence should not be understated. Everything had really been talk, rather than action, up to the point at which KMGN agreed to announce the launch of the KM Landscape activity in its joint 'Trends for 2025' in early December 2024. At the same time, the KM Landscape webpage (hosted as part of the KMGN website) and sign-on form were released. In addition to this a Google Drive folder was created as well as creating a dedicated KM Landscape MIRO board. All of these aspects of support meant that the KM Landscape was now a package as a solid and tangible entity, given the name 'Project' by KMGN, which facilitated its launch in late January 2025.

4 A problem space

4.1 Defining the problem space

In order that the KM Landscape could address the issues raised by those KM community voices engaged, there was still a need to better define the 'problem space', whilst also keeping an open view on any additional needs brought by those who joined the KM Landscape project. In order to not unnecessarily restrict the problem space (i.e., 'what is it exactly that the KM Landscape aims to achieve'), rather than pre-defining it (and constraining the solution space) thematics were adopted as general guiding principles for the co-creation: the KM Landscape activity is based on a theme of '*breaking convention*' and, as an end-point, a theme of '*KM4free / KM pro bono.*' In this way, the opportunity was created for those engaging in the KM Landscape to determine both the path and the end point, whilst following and heading towards these thematic goals.

4.2 Author's reflection

During the KM Landscape, I became aware of Matthew Syed's work on Problem Space (Rebel Ideas) and used this framework to better understand and inform the way in which the KM Landscape problem space was (not) defined (Syed, 2019).



Figure 1. Problem space definition drivers

The interpretation of Syed's work is that in Figure 1 the solid-lined box shows the limited problem space which translates to the KM Landscape if the case had been where a path, content and outcome were pre-defined. Overlaid on this problem space are thought bubbles representing the varying perspectives of KM Landscape co-creators, unconstrained by a pre-determined plan or outcome.

Syed proposes that having pre-defined the problem space, as individuals we then recruit those we know (and trust) to address the problem space. However, in doing so, we (subconsciously) choose those people who also represent our or very similar views and perspectives. As such the group of problem solvers then only address a proportion of the problem as they are not spread across this space however grouped around a single area of the problem space.

Using this model, the KM Landscape interpretation is then that pre-definition in itself would have limited participation, and subsequently those contributing within each step. Instead, cocreators hopped on from a wide range of areas (given in the sign-on sheet) and their voices (the thought bubbles) created a broader / less constrained set of perspectives, which in turn gave a better reflection of KMer perspectives at this time. This in turn then extended and expanded the problem space itself – giving a better representation of the KM Landscape through the more varied terms / definitions collected. The problem space is then expanded as shown in Figure 2. In this way the participants defined the problem space and not the other way around.



Figure 2. Co-creators responses to the project

The space itself being defined through their cocreated inputs, being extended and reinforced through every co-creative session of the KM Landscape.

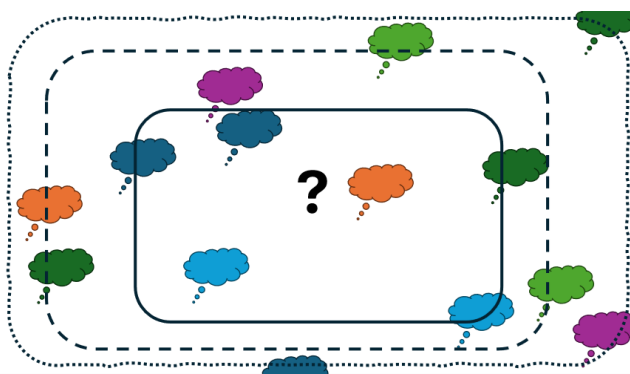


Figure 3. Participants’ influence on the KM Landscape: the problem space

Whilst this reflection may be self-fulfilling (i.e., find a model that fits your problem), it greatly assisted in providing an increased in confidence about answering the question ‘are we doing the KM Landscape in the right way to get a true view on the KM Landscape in 2025.’ As the model was only found part way through the KM Landscape activity, so the mode of problem space definition was already set, the model offered an unexpected confirmatory view on the approach taken

(which had been derived from a consolidation of advice given during the pre-launch phase).

Examples of this shift in problem space were when launching the KM Landscape it was proposed to embrace the familiar Topic based views of knowledge management: ‘people-process-technology’ grouping in Terms Lists. Even after the first meeting, the co-creative inputs had expanded this to embrace Terms Lists for Topics of ‘people-process-technology-content-governance/strategy.’ Within a couple of meetings, it was also identified that the areas of application of knowledge management was also relevant and so Application dedicated Terms Lists were created for ‘organisational–development-societal-personal-cognitive/knowledge science.’

5 The process

5.1 Outreach

To embrace an open and inclusive approach there was a need to continually raise awareness to promote diversity. To this aim, a significant emphasis was put on raising awareness of and engaging cocreators in the KM Landscape project, and this continued throughout the life of the project. This was with the recognition that in order to help KMers ‘do KM’, a novel outcome was needed. A ‘new’ approach then would

need to engage different voices, challenging the same voices / same outcomes or familiar voices / familiar outcomes. Outreach was within and outside of the KM discipline (i.e., those bordering disciplines) by connecting with communities or representative bodies in order to raise awareness and engage them in support the cocreators (some of whom were already members of knowledge management groups or entities).

5.2 Enabling participation

Aerospace itself was used as an example of exploration at the launch of the project, for example, giving the example of satellites observing, collecting data and recording through specific sensing capabilities. The need to create a significant moment for conversation, dialogue, exchanges and also codification was present and respected to enable participation, contribution and co-creation.

It was important to be clear on the commitment or steps, and seeking permission to extend with limits. The number of steps (meetings) was given each week and the progress mapped for all to see in the introduction. When the number of steps needed increasing, this was put as a proposal to the group and we proceeded only upon their agreement.

We had hop-on / hop-off participation to suit many levels of availability. This recognised that most co-creators and participants were full-time KMers with little space time, or part time KMers with even less time. To cater for this, the KM Landscape adopted an approach of hop-on / hop-off.

The Leads (see *Governance* for role) in the process were able to provide some constancy and focus with co-leads to avoid overload. To keep some form of continuity with co-creation in the areas of discussion, the Leads/co-Leads provided a constant presence for each Topic or Application. This continuity was needed both as part of the biweekly meeting and also between them – so both representation of an area and also collecting the cocreated inputs. Breakout groups were employed to promote unguided discussion and Miro boards creating outcomes. There was a deliberate approach of (the KM Project Lead) not engaging in the breakouts so as to assure that these were free-floating and free of any potential Project Lead bias or expectation.

Topic and Application Leads were present in the meeting breakouts to support and enable co-creation.

5.3 Clarity of purpose

By focussing on the exploration and capturing of terms that made up the fullest range of language of KM, the intent of the KM Landscape was not to create anything new, but to collect together what already existed. In this way it was intended that the co-creators were to not be burdened with getting consensus during the creation of a single set of terminology however to work more freely and include the differing use of the same terms along with their varied or even contradictory meanings. The deliberate choice of having a Thematic for process, breaking convention and a Thematic for outcome, namely *KM4Free*, created initial clarity, and co-creators openly acknowledged this within the breakout discussion, captured in the breakout session MIRO boards.

5.4 Helping and keeping engagement

The KM Landscape openly acknowledged its need to be attractive, productive and sympathetic to individual's needs, one of which was bring in tough with the latest developments in the KM field that related to or gave insights across the discipline. By bringing in outside perspectives/views/activities, this provided a changing reflective backdrop for specific meetings, yet was given under a consistent heading of the KM Landscape co-creation. In addition, these 'outside perspectives' were used as reflective means and gave stimulus for thought discussion and co-creative expression.

One example was the KM Map (2025) given as a potential manifestation (visualisation) of a KM Landscape expression. For a complete list of guest appearances (see sub-section below on *Examples of Engagement*). In this way of involving voices from inside and outside of the KM Landscape, we provided cocreators ideas of what might or could be (directly enabling exploration of the idea of 'what is the KM Landscape' through examples of previous work on KM as a whole.

The other way of enabling engagement was with the co-creative meeting opening of 'thought enablers.' These were open questions provided at the beginning of each meeting to bring in everyone in to the conversation and have their voice heard, even if in the chat function. This chat was made available after the meeting. For a complete list of engagement questions, see the sub-section below on *Thought enablers*.

5.5 Uncertainty

As the project started with a question (uncertainty), the dialogue it created was quite open and expansive, whilst

remaining around the core consideration of ‘doing KM better for KMers.’ Over the period of around 4 months, exchanges shaped the KM Landscape activity. There were key aspects of this dialogue which then shaped the activity – one of these being the recognition of and having an openness to failure – making a potential failure outcome part of the beginning dialogue.

As a conceptual relation to embracing potential failure, the uncertainty of the KM Landscape was made somewhat more approachable and, therefore, made an inherent and beneficial part of the open acceptance of each co-creative voice. As the KM Landscape itself was not predefined, and explored and realised co-creatively, its scope (‘boundary’) was only realised as the meetings progressed and the Terms Lists populated.

6 Examples of engagement

6.1 Radical KM

For 4 co-creative meetings (Steps 3 to 6), Radical KM provided a reflective moment at the beginning of the session to allow cocreators to detach from the week’s work, and then connect with the KM Landscape, through a short meditation. Some feedback from this:

- *It was calming, thanks*
- *It's good to breath for a while!*
- *It helps me to centre myself for this event*
- *The busyness of the week had caught up with me and this was a great way to decompress*
- *It's fun to see what the mind brings freely to surface*
- *Great exercise, the head was empty at once*

6.2 Knowledge Management Map, 2025

In two co-creative meetings (Steps 6 and 8), the then newly released [Knowledge Management Map \(Stratactical, 2025\)](#) was presented by John Howell of Stratactical. This map is a visual representation of the knowledge management field as a island archipelago in which islands, seas, oceans and leand features are labelled with terms form knowledge management. The discussion of the map provided a practical / tangible view and perspective on what a KM Landscape outcome might look like, if co-creatively selected as an outcome to address either ‘Needs4KM’ or ‘KM4Needs.’ The final position for Phase I was that the KM in the KM Map 2025 (some 356 terms) and give greater insight Landscape Terms list could accommodate all the terms given to the terms, their

meanings and source references. Some feedback on this co-creative learning included:

- *Difficult to comment but the map is beautiful !!!*
- *I was really happy to see Knowledge Management for Development (KM4Dev) [community] as central (of course) and also to see a special island for diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) and decolonization of knowledge BUT it does show the limitations of metaphors. I mean should DEI and decolonization of knowledge be on an island? And where is anti-racism?*
- *I love the KM Map. My biggest problem is linking Innovation Island to the mainland via Technology.*
- *Shouldn't Knowledge Management for Sustainable Development (KM4SD) been as prominent on the map as organizational KM?*
- *It is a great way to think about the field*
- *I don't like the truth that it is so fragmented. Because it is. And I can't see Tacit knowledge, while implicit and explicit is. Did I miss it.*
- *I don't really agree with any of these as the advantages. More that it is a heuristic to reflect on KM.*
- *The map is a great conversation starter, perhaps also a great list of terms. Limitation is that it is two-dimensional and one possible representation out of hundreds that would be equally valid in my opinion.*

6.3 Newcomers briefing @ Step 8

In between Steps 8 and 9, we held a Newcomers briefing to help those who joined later on to have a complete up-to-date view on the KM Landscape and the Steps completed to date. This was found to be very helpful by them and allowed them to more fully engage in the process of walking, talking and working their way along the KM Landscape path.

6.4 KM4DEV Knowledge Sharing Toolkit

In Step 11, KM4DEV presented its new ‘Knowledge sharing toolkit’ (KM4Dev) and the co-creative breakouts considered this as a KM resource and also a guiding measure for the ‘switch’² insight that were going on in the KM Landscape breakouts meeting. Table 1 lists the thought enablers

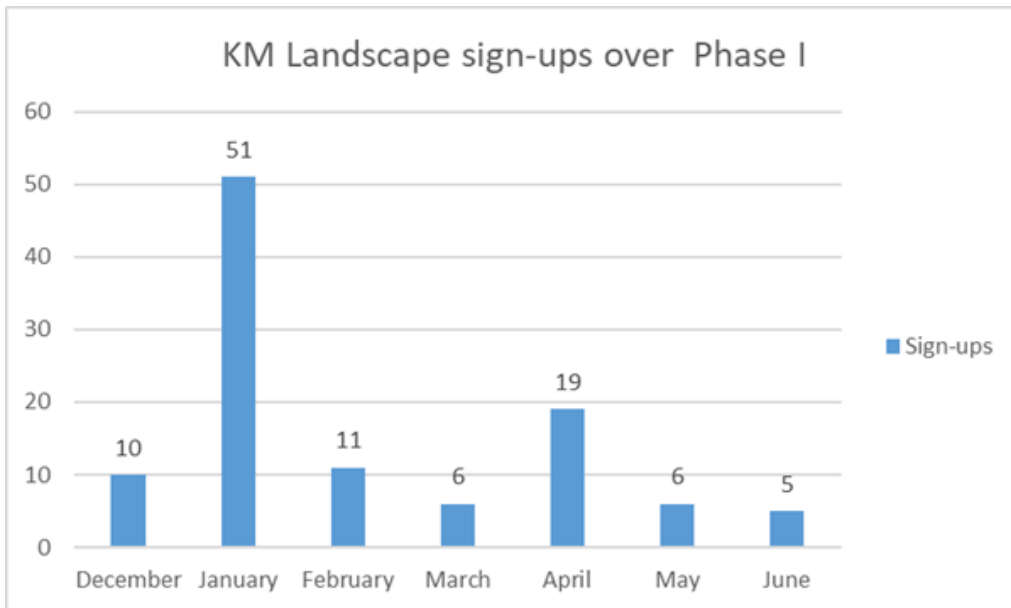


Figure 4. Sign-ups with Launch on 24/01/2025 – running until Step 12 on 11/07/2025

as a ‘warm-up’ as everyone is arriving to the responses from the participants.

this way not representing their host organisations or employer).

6.5 RealKM

On the closing meeting (Step 12), RealKM Magazine³ provided a content and technical insight into the workings of RealKM, as a significant authoritative source of KM knowledge and resources. This presentation of the on-line tool and insights to its upkeep created reflection of not only the diverse range of topics covered and the comprehensive way this was done (covering all the KM Landscape Topic areas of *people, process, technology, content and governance / strategy*) but also the way in which these were stored and categorized. The category names then giving direct reflection on the KM Landscape Terms Lists (separation into Topic and Applications, and the labels used for these).

6.6 Thought enablers

Thought enablers are questions or ideas shared on an opening slide of each meeting which aimed to ‘enable’ or facilitate co-creators (participants) to engage with the.

7 KM Landscape

7.1 The people

The KM Landscape attracted around 110 people to sign up for the initiative, collectively coming together as a group of individual experts to contribute to the KM Landscape (so in



Figure 5. Co-creators experience of KM

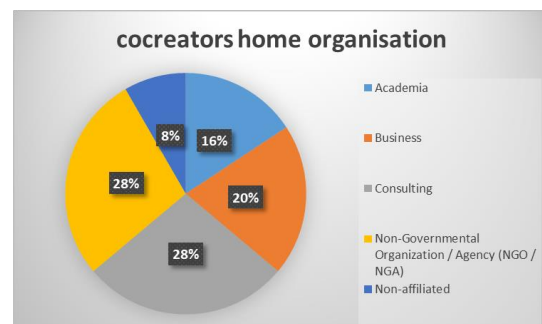


Figure 6. Co-creators’ organizations

On sign-up individuals were asked for their preferred area of exploration, either people, process or technology-based cocreation. The majority chose people-based (Figure 6). The geographical range of those signing up was global.

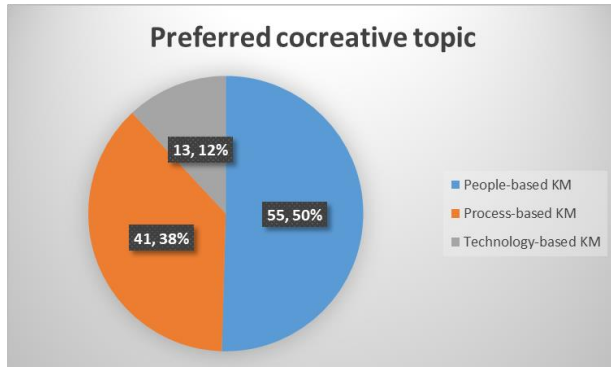


Figure 6. Preferred topics

7.2 The phases

The KM Landscape process was to hold a co-creative activity meeting every 2 weeks for 90 minutes with 60% of each meeting dedicated to breakout sessions + feedback. In-between meetings with Topic and Application Leads took place to bring the co-creative content into the Terms Lists.

The KM Landscape had two discrete phases: concept preparation and creation, and a co-creative phase.

7.2.1 Concept creation

Setting up the KM Landscape was through conversations with recognisable voices of KM, mostly those active in LinkedIn, however also outside of this on recommendation of the network as conversations progressed. This involved building up and connecting with (what were referred to as) Thought Leaders, and also representative bodies and Communities of Practice. In each case contact and exchanges were held at the individual level giving advice and guidance, clarifying and refining the concept as and when needed.

Having reached a stable concept for the KM Landscape and (informal) support, it was then possible to consider moving towards launch and opening up sign-up. Prior to the Launch event there were around 58 people already signed up, some from over 7 weeks before the first meeting. In order to engage this group and further get feedback on the concept from this group, a question of *'what do you think the KM Landscape would look like'* was emailed to participants along with currently available (free-to-access) publications that might help participants reflect on the KM Landscape task ahead. Permission to use these resources was gained during

the project set-up phase. The 2 visualisations that could be considered as already existing the KM Landscape sent out, both provided by the author and used with their permission: an extract from the 'KM cook book' (Collinson et al., 2019) and the Knowledge Management Map (2014).

7.2.2 Co-creative phase

For the running of the KM Landscape co-creative, bi-weekly 90-minute sessions, the basic technique was to give those signed up the space to co-create: mostly to talk, and 'walk' together. The co-creative sessions were designed to promote thinking and individual expression: with a starter question or 'thought enabler' as a warm-up to each session. This took place in the 15 minutes where the session was open and yet the meeting had not begun, typically 10 minutes before to 5 minutes after the hour to accommodate a range of join-on times.

The following technology was used to support the online walking / talking / working approach to the co-creation: 1) using Zoom meeting, with polls for breakout group self-selection and where productive, and mostly chat with a video recording (edited), audio file, transcript and chat. 2) a PowerPoint was used to guide the session structure, and a template that followed a set structure (Figure 7). 3) MIRO Boards were set up for each breakout group to capture the outcome of each session. There was one unique Board zone per meeting (Figure 8). 4) A Google drive was used to house all tangible outcomes, including all resources created from Zoom; each step and Term List dedicated folders (for Topics and Applications); and models and guides generated. 5) LinkedIn was used to publish meeting summary, which included the sign-on link, KM Landscape overview link, a shout-out to co-creators, a summary, the images used, links to supportive resources, and the call for inclusive diverse voices (Figure 9). 6) KMGN websites covering the KM Landscape introduction and the link to sign-on form. 7) a Microsoft Form used for sign-on including QR code to ease sign-on and communication, and Excel used for Terms Lists, and Microsoft Lists were going to be used – however it became immediately apparent that this was an exclusive feature that prevented some co-creators from contributing so a shift to excel was undertaken. 8) Email for biweekly status and outcomes from previous co-creative sessions. 9) Links to Google Drive (with all files from session), the LinkedIn article, copy-and-paste (for those without access), and attached article images, and calendar invites.

Step	Opening question	Example answers
Launch	Add to the meeting chat - a music track that Represents you Inspires / motivates / helps you in the day-to-day	Surprise yourself – Jack Garrat Why so serious – Alice Merton It ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it – Fun Boy Three, Bananarama Superman – Armin van Buurman, Blasterjaxx, 24h Coney Island Baby - Lou Reed Nomade Orchestra, instrumental brazilian music Sungha Jung, a Korean guitar player
Step 1	What do you consider to be the guiding principles / values of KM	Trust; multiple knowledges; Impact!; sharing; people first and technology later; conversations; willingness to share and ability to receive; getting the right knowledge to the right people just at the right time to support informed decisions; inclusion and diversity; human-centred
Step 2	How is KM Landscape shaping up for you?	"I'm starting to believe..."; "Cool! Enjoying it"; "Agree, think it's a good process"; "Interesting process with the potential for beneficial outcomes, but a significant time commitment"
Step 3	What is your must-have term for the KM Landscape?	Praxis; radical KM; common understanding of KM related vocabulary and competences required; strategy; holistic mindset; Culture; tacit knowledge (hot topic for different definitions); value generation
Step 4	What is the most important KM principle?	Collaboration; respect; trust; human centred; inclusivity; feeling able to share; curiosity; focus on relevant knowledge; Effectiveness; privacy; learning produce knowledge and attention produce learning; openness
Step 5	What is your favourite KM resource?	KM4Dev (the community members; RealKM Magazine (of course); GO-TKM global community; my network and my library; KM4D Journal; personal network & KM institute; KMGN and SIKM; Milton, N. & Lambe, P. (2016). The Knowledge Manager's Handbook. Kogan Page.; My colleagues and friends; my network, KMGN, GfWM (German speaking) communities; SIKM has been very helpful.
Step 6	How's the updated KM Map for you?	See section above for feedback
Step 7	How many different types of knowledge can you name?	Indigenous; explicit and tacit; First Nations; implicit; codified; personal; embodied knowledge; collective, institutional; local; organisational; body of knowledge; community/social; conversational dialogic; academic; experiential; inter-organisational; procedural knowledge; Movement; declarative/conceptual;
Step 8	I prefer these ways to learn?	High-tech – 50%; Low tech – 25%; Both – 25%
Step 9	What's the most important switch in perspective needed in KM?	Bridge the research-practice gap The complete picture of KM Have an agile perspective / growth mindset KM practitioners needs a more strategic and impact driven contribution. I would say AI completely changes the game, but it's so obvious a willingness to engage at senior/exec level. Was discussing this only yesterday! KM involves managing information, infrastructure, expertise and process. With the growth of AI, we need to focus on the parts that KM excels at and be ready to let go of things that AI now does better than us. KM needs to bridge the disciplinary divides that still hampers it.
Step 10	Give me a random thought ...	Do others also think that systems thinking approaches enhance KM? The most effective learner isn't the one who studies the hardest. It's the one who connects everything to what they already know. They build mental bridges. They create analogies. They weave knowledge webs. I think KM and lessons learned are seen as separate in my organisation, too, which is why KM is a hard sell here I had Lessons Management under me in Emergency Services, but in my new role it is part of the Stakeholder Management team.

7.3 Content

This comprises pre-event content (KM Landscape Concept briefings, KMGH-hosted KM Landscape webpage content, and Sign-on Form); pre-meeting content (Meeting introduction and guide to co-creative breakout and feedback); Meeting, codified content (meeting chat content and co-creative MIRO Board inputs); post-meeting content (Excel spreadsheet of all Miro Board post-its, LinkedIn article and summary email to all those signed up) and ‘between’ meeting content (Terms Lists in Excel files, models for categorisation for visual representation of relationships, Word documents on Topic List overviews, Terms Lists Drafting guidelines, draft KM Landscape strategy documents which were AI generated, and lead role guidelines).

7.4 Governance and strategy

7.4.1 Governance

The way in which governance was established was through the Leads being given sole (or shared with co-Leads) responsibility for and hence “owning” their Topic or Application Terms Lists. The KM Landscape Project Lead provided membership, outreach, logistics and organisational support and opened each session. Each Topic / Application Lead (and co-Leads) was giving guidelines and training for their responsibilities, along the following lines:

- Own the selected KM Landscape Topic or Application being open to all (and including / reporting any differing) perspectives.
- Keep aligned with the KM Landscape Topic or Application groups (thinking, ways of working, reporting) through a Leads project coordination meetings / exchanges.
- Lead a small team (up to about 10 people, I imagine), and assign micro-tasks to achieve the following.
- Decide what are the key high-level concepts and name these as a term.
- Obtain definitions of what these concepts/terms are (what these terms mean).
- Discover how/where these concepts/terms are implemented/applied.
- Explore for any critiques or perspectives on their (suitability or customisation for) application.

7.4.2 Strategy

If there was a strategy, it was in the way we work: walking, talking, working together. The Thematic elements supported this with process:

- ‘breaking convention’ and outcome
- ‘KM4free / KM pro bono.’
- Struggles with business plan – with such high number of unknowns, resisting using planning to provide a false certainty / reassurance – whereas in reality it was a step by step revealed path.
- Business planning – giving the concept of control / certainty of or intention of outcome where none was needed or desired at that step / at each / at any step.
- Business plan – creating a greater risk of excluding cocreation, diverse thinking and open learning, than any benefits

7.4.3 Ethos

During the biweekly 90-minute gatherings, there was discussion of ethos about the following aspects:

- About the people – not putting it in a box
- About a way of thinking over process
- About an intention thematic over outcome
- About a question over answer
- About relationship over transaction
- About inclusivity over exclusivity
- About content over timescale

8 Author’s reflection

I struggled greatly with the idea of whether or not the KM Landscape would benefit from a documented ‘Strategic Plan’. My uncertainties led me to not set out in any way to create such a document. This concept (and content) felt to me to be both too rigid and also too unknown. Even if it were needed, how would you create such a document if the goal was to be flexible and take things literally one step at a time? I had to confront these doubts when on two separate occasions when co-creators volunteered their personal time and efforts (separately) to create a strategic document for the KM Landscape. On both occasions, they were proposals produced through using AI techniques to gather together KM Landscape content and structure it in a convincing, cohesive and coherent whole.

Both of these documents were well constructed as Strategic Plans. However, both proposed a rigidity of framework and in this, their existence risked taking the KM Landscape into the domain of control and predictability, a zone I was confident would not benefit the cocreators and as a result the usefulness of the potential outcome(s) of the KM

Landscape. Neither document was completed and remained as draft concepts, examples of AI generated templates as opposed to outcomes of (human) co-creation.

About the author

Andrew Herd has 25 years of experience in the space domain, with the past decade as Senior Engineer for Corporate Knowledge Management at the European Space Agency (ESA). During his tenure, he led over 50 lesson capture and learning initiatives, significantly contributing to ESA's Lessons Learned program. He has also managed knowledge management for the largest Directorate at ESA, which includes approximately 1,000 space experts. His leadership was crucial in addressing knowledge loss due to a wave of retirements, organizing more than 200 "Legacy" events to identify knowledge gaps and develop effective capture strategies. A notable achievement of Andrew's is his role in creating and managing the development of innovative Lessons Learned web and mobile applications. These tools

incorporate Knowledge Graph and Chatbot AI technologies, improving the efficiency and quality of knowledge capture and retrieval for users. Andrew is a recognised thought leader, having authored over 30 publications, including academic papers, case studies, and books. He is the lead author of 20 of these works and has produced a podcast mini-series on knowledge management in the space sector. Additionally, he has chaired international panels on lessons learned, further establishing his expertise in the field.

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¹ * *'throughout'* might be better interpreted as *'dotted across'*, and whilst the idea of an 'ecosystem' still holds valid, the intent of this article is not to give the impression that the KM Landscape was successful in including all those (representative) voices which make up the KM Landscape / ecosystem.

² The switch involved Topic Leads sharing their developed Terms Lists with Application Leads, and vice versa – giving a broad reflective perspective on the List construction and content (which varied considerably between Leads)

³ <https://realkm.com/>