

Ryerson University Joins Age-Friendly University Initiative

TORONTO, August 7, 2018 – Ryerson University is pleased to announce its designation as a member of the [Age-Friendly University Global Network](#), an international effort dedicated to the role higher education can play in responding to the challenges and opportunities associated with an ageing population.

The initiative is driven by 10 principles, which provide a valuable guiding framework for distinguishing and evaluating age-friendly programs and policies, as well as identifying institutional gaps and opportunities for growth.

“With a commitment to the endorsement of the 10 principles of Age-Friendly Universities, Ryerson will continue to lead in the development of courses, programming and environments that support and meet the needs of older adults in our community,” said Ryerson University President and Vice-Chancellor Mohamed Lachemi.

The 10 principles are as follows:

1. To encourage the participation of older adults in all the core activities of the university, including educational and research programs.
2. To promote personal and career development in the second half of life and to support those who wish to pursue second careers.
3. To recognize the range of educational needs of older adults (from those who were early school-leavers through to those who wish to pursue master’s or PhD qualifications).
4. To promote intergenerational learning to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages.
5. To widen access to online educational opportunities for older adults to ensure a diversity of routes to participation.
6. To ensure that the university’s research agenda is informed by the needs of an ageing society and to promote public discourse on how higher education can better respond to the varied interests and needs of older adults.
7. To increase the understanding of students of the longevity dividend and the increasing complexity and richness that ageing brings to our society.
8. To enhance access for older adults to the university’s range of health and wellness programs and its arts and cultural activities.
9. To engage actively with the university’s own retired community.
10. To ensure regular dialogue with organizations representing the interests of the ageing population.

While the principles will help guide Ryerson’s future development to better meet the needs of older adults, the university has already taken several steps towards integrating older learners into its programming and course offerings. Through G. Raymond Chang School for Continuing Education, Ryerson offers non-credit courses to support the learning, enrichment and self-actualization of older learners. At the same time, the university has launched new graduate degree programs in gerontology and health administration for community care. Ryerson’s Ted Rogers School of Management is also home to the [National Institute on Ageing \(NIA\)](#), Canada’s first policy research institute dedicated exclusively to considering ageing from both a health and financial perspective.

“Communities and universities all over the world are responding to the call for more age-friendly living environments that address the needs of our ageing population,” said Ryerson Board of Governors member Dr. Samir Sinha, who also serves as chair of the Advisory Board of the NIA and is the Director of Geriatrics at Sinai Health System and the University Health Network. “With these age-friendly principles guiding the development of our urban campus, we can be confident that we are meeting the needs of older learners in the most supportive way possible.”

The Age-Friendly University Initiative was launched in 2012 by Irish Taoiseach Enda Kenny and Dublin City University (DCU) President Brian MacCraith, PhD. DCU leads the effort with partner institutions in the U.S., U.K., Canada, and Ireland. Learn more at dcu.ie/agefriendly/index.shtml.

Ryerson’s membership in the Age Friendly University Network coincides with the 14th Global Conference on Ageing, hosted by the International Federation on Ageing (IFA). The conference is convening from August 8th to the 10th at Ryerson University and the Chelsea Hotel. Ryerson University and the NIA are proud sponsors of the conference, which will bring to our campus delegates from over 70 countries to learn, present, and discuss international issues in ageing.

“Universities are important laboratories for thoughtful conversations, innovations and actions across generations – ‘age’ is not the conversation but can be the driver of change through sharing ideas and opportunities. The IFA congratulates Ryerson in joining this global community that has the responsibility of making age-friendly much more than bricks and mortar,” said Dr. Jane Barratt – Secretary General of the International Federation on Ageing, an organization in 62 countries, representing 50 million older people.

About the National Institute on Ageing (NIA) *The National Institute on Ageing (NIA) is a new policy and research centre based at Ryerson University in Toronto. The NIA is dedicated to enhancing successful ageing across the life course. It is unique in its mandate to consider ageing issues from a broad range of important perspectives, including those of financial, physical, psychological, and social wellness. The NIA is also focused on leading cross-disciplinary research to better understand the issues that can lead to the development of evidence-informed actionable insights that can meaningfully contribute towards shaping the innovative policies, practices and products that will be needed to address the multiple challenges and opportunities presented by Canada’s coming of age. The NIA is committed to providing national leadership and promoting a collaborative approach that also seeks to continually establish municipal, provincial, federal and global partnerships with other academic centres, and other ageing-related organizations.*

To learn more about the NIA visit our website at <http://www.ryerson.ca/nia> and follow us on Twitter @RyersonNIA

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