

# OUR TIME TO LEAD

**Ryerson  
University**

Academic Plan  
2014–2019

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Office of the  
Provost and  
Vice President  
Academic



**Ryerson is on a transformative path to become Canada's leading comprehensive innovation university.**

***It is our time to lead. →***

Located in the heart of one of the world's most culturally and linguistically diverse urban centres, Ryerson's high-quality programs and scholarly, research and creative activities extend beyond the walls of the university.

Ryerson is deeply connected to the city and the world beyond, attracting talent, opportunities and global connections to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Programs and curriculum are not static; they are relevant to changing careers, professions and scholarly disciplines. Students, faculty and staff challenge the status quo with new solutions and new ways of thinking. Long-standing partnerships with community, industry, government and professional practice drive research and innovation that responds to real-world problems.

Ryerson recognizes that creativity and innovation should not be contained. Its diverse learning community collaborates across disciplines and with external partners, taking smart, calculated risks to turn promising ideas into tangible solutions, products, processes or services that make a positive and meaningful impact upon society. Students are trusted to learn. In their programs and through experiential learning opportunities, students solve complex problems, think critically and communicate clearly, gaining the confidence and knowledge to enter diverse professions, build careers, or launch their own ventures and create jobs.

Ryerson also challenges conventional ideas of a university by blurring the boundaries between its campus and downtown Toronto. The Mattamy Athletic Centre at Maple Leaf Gardens has brought an iconic building back to life, the Ryerson Image Centre has helped make Toronto an international photography destination, and the Student Learning Centre is transforming Yonge Street.

The evolution of Ryerson has positioned the university to be ready and able to take on a role in keeping with its success as a connector, builder and innovator.

This is Ryerson's time to lead.

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# Our Momentum

**In two decades, Ryerson has transformed into a comprehensive university with an array of undergraduate, master's and doctoral programs and diverse scholarly, research and creative (SRC) activities. Shaping Our Future, the university's 2008 - 13 academic plan, identified priorities that contributed to Ryerson's remarkable success and development. The dedicated efforts of countless talented people moved Ryerson far beyond the expectations set by that plan.**

**This academic plan builds upon Ryerson's proud traditions and its position as a leading post-secondary institution. It expands the university's strengths for relevant programs and SRC activities, its engaging learning and teaching environment that integrates theory with practice and strong relationships with external communities.**

## Reputation for Excellence



***Ryerson has earned a reputation for high-quality, professional and career-related education and responsive SRC activity, and its programs are in high demand.***

As of the 2013-14 academic year, it had grown to 40,000 students, with 140,000 alumni worldwide. More than 100 undergraduate, master's and PhD programs are offered across a wide range of disciplines – from arts and humanities to science and engineering. Ryerson has become the first choice for more undergraduate applicants than any other Ontario university relative to available spaces. In a relatively short 10-year span, graduate education has become firmly established; last year, the university received six applications for every available graduate space. Nearly all of its undergraduate programs, and many of its graduate programs, provide experiential learning – a hallmark of Ryerson's educational experience. Ryerson has pursued professional accreditation where it is available; today, two-thirds of its undergraduate students are enrolled in accredited programs. Ryerson is a leader in online university education in Ontario, and it is home to The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, Canada's largest continuing education provider, with more than 1,500 courses, seminars and workshops, and 90 certificate programs to promote lifelong learning.

Ryerson's SRC activity, local and international partnerships, and external funding are growing steadily and contributing to its rising reputation. Total research funding doubled between 2008 and 2013, and in 2012-13, Ryerson ranked fifth in sponsored research among Ontario non-medical/doctoral universities. In addition, Ryerson has established academic and research partnerships with more than 130 institutions in 34 countries.

## Social, Cultural & Economic Impact



***Ryerson's approach to responding to the complex and rapidly evolving needs of society is distinct from other post-secondary institutions.***

The university's urban context is an advantage and influences how students and faculty learn and teach, engage in creative practice, and pursue research and innovation; the local urban focus also makes the university globally relevant. The Ryerson experience is multi-faceted. It emphasizes basic and applied research, creative endeavours and scholarly activities that respond to real-world problems in community, government, and the private and not-for-profit sectors. It is built on programs designed to be relevant to changing careers, professions and scholarly disciplines, with significant opportunities for research and experiential learning. Graduates go on to make important contributions in their fields of practice and in broader society. Deep connections and partnerships with leading institutions, community agencies, industry, government and professional practices drive program and research relevancy.

## The City Builder



***Ryerson is – and always has been – very much a part of its community and city. The university takes pride in being situated in the heart of downtown Toronto and the GTA. Declaring its intention to be a city builder, Ryerson has enriched and contributed to public life in broad ways.***

Ryerson purposefully aims to make post-secondary education more inclusive. Its student population reflects the increasing diversity of the city, and the university provides access and support to under-represented groups, in particular first-generation students, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and internationally educated professionals. Its Spanning the Gaps program is geared toward young people and adults who might not otherwise experience post-secondary education. Ryerson has more than 500 Aboriginal students on campus and recognizes that Aboriginal people have a distinct history in Canada and unique contemporary experiences. In 2012, the university was presented with an Eagle Staff to recognize 20 years of leadership in Aboriginal support, programming and partnerships.

Ryerson's academic and research partnerships with leading institutions such as St. Michael's Hospital, TIFF (Toronto International Film Festival), Bombardier Aerospace and Hydro One are having a positive and transformative effect upon society. Ryerson continues to attract new talent, opportunities and global connections to its campus, and contributes to the city's economic development and civic, cultural and social vitality.

Launched in 2008, Ryerson's award-winning Master Plan has been a catalyst for change and renewal both on campus and in the university's downtown

neighbourhood. The Mattamy Athletic Centre at Maple Leaf Gardens brought the country's most historic sports arena back into the international spotlight, enabling the university to deepen the student life experience, attract talented student athletes and offer unique opportunities to children, families, community groups and organizations. The Ryerson Image Centre, home to the famous Black Star Collection, is strengthening research and graduate education in a niche discipline and helping to make Toronto an international photography destination. The Student Learning Centre is transforming Yonge Street and will provide a new collaborative learning and research space for developing synergies between students and faculty from all disciplines.

## Fostering Innovation



***Ryerson's innovation agenda is strengthened by its strong connections to community and city.***

For Ryerson, innovation means encouraging its academic community to challenge the status quo with new solutions and to apply new ways of thinking that transform the world. As one of the world's most diverse and urban universities, it also recognizes that innovation depends on diversity of experience and thought.

Innovation at Ryerson is fed by robust programs, SRC activity and experiential learning. Students, faculty and staff discover, create and explore new ideas in more than 100 labs, institutes and research centres. They collaborate with a growing number of Canadian and international partners, and undertake responsive research that meets the needs of society. The result is a community that tackles pressing issues, develops new solutions, technologies and products, and launches social, cultural, civic and commercial ventures. Ryerson's leadership and commitment to

social innovation and entrepreneurship was recognized when it was named the Ashoka Foundation's first Canadian Changemaker Campus.

Through its programs and zone learning – a pioneering approach to experiential learning that is transforming entrepreneurial education in Canada. Ryerson is shaping the next generation of change makers and advocacy leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs. Zone learning builds on the success of the Digital Media Zone (DMZ), one of Canada's largest communities of start-ups, and the Innovation Centre for Urban Energy (iCUE), which is the country's first business incubator and accelerator devoted solely to urban energy. Since its inception in 2010, the DMZ has helped young entrepreneurs create more than 100 companies and 900 jobs.

This enterprising spirit is also evident inside the university. The Ryerson community is encouraged to test ideas, think creatively and work across units to ensure that structures, systems, processes and policies remain flexible, nimble and responsive as the needs of the university change.



# Taking Ryerson Forward

*Ryerson will be  
Canada's leading  
comprehensive  
innovation university.*

“With Mind and Skill”

Ryerson University motto:  
“Mente et Artificio”



## Mission

Ryerson's distinctive core mission – to serve societal need by providing career-related and professional education, and scholarly, creative and research activities – responds to the demand for highly skilled, creative and critical thinkers who can frame increasingly interconnected, complex problems and determine effective solutions. It conveys the responsibility to serve as well as anticipate and respond to societal need by seeking and defining new opportunities to make the world better.

Ryerson's diverse learning community drives new lines of inquiry to foster responsive and robust research, innovation, and scholarly and creative endeavours. The university brings to life its motto "With Mind and Skill." The foundational knowledge of a discipline is combined with real-world experiential learning experiences and life skills such as critical thinking, creativity and the self-confidence to take calculated risks. Cross-cultural competence and a deep appreciation of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the campus and the city help students to become responsible and engaged global citizens. Students are not only prepared for future careers and professions but are empowered to drive change in existing organizations, launch new companies, social or civic ventures, and create jobs.

Ryerson's mission statement has guided the university's development for the past 20 years:

*"The special mission of Ryerson University is the advancement of applied knowledge and research to address societal need, and the provision of programs of study that provide a balance between theory and application and that prepare students for careers in professional and quasi-professional fields. As a leading centre for applied education, Ryerson is recognized for the excellence of its teaching, the relevance of its curriculum, the success of its students in achieving their academic and career objectives, the quality of its scholarship, research and creative activity and its commitment to accessibility, lifelong learning, and involvement in the broader community."*  
(Ryerson University Mission Statement, 1994)\*

## Vision

Ryerson will be Canada's leading comprehensive innovation university, recognized for its high-quality, career-related and professional bachelor, master's and doctoral programs, and relevant scholarly, research and creative activities. It will be a global leader in interdisciplinary, entrepreneurial zone learning. Ryerson's students, graduates and faculty will contribute significantly to Ontario's and Canada's social, cultural and economic well-being.

Ryerson will provide students with the best learning experience, leading to great careers and engaged graduates who enable change. The university, through the sustained work of faculty and staff, is continuing on a transformative path to meet the changing needs of students and helping to shape Canada's future generation of change makers and advocacy leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs. As the next step in its evolution, Ryerson will enhance and expand its strong foundation of distinctive programs and SRC activities. It will continue to cultivate leadership in new approaches to teaching and learning. The university will continue to foster innovation and entrepreneurship through zone learning and partnerships with public, private and not-for-profit organizations, attracting the brightest and most ambitious innovators from around the world.

As a city builder, Ryerson will extend its community engagement. The university will draw new opportunities and global connections to the GTA that encourage social and cultural innovation and economic development. Ryerson will promote inclusion through clear pathways for transfer students, access and outreach initiatives and support for members of under-represented groups, and grow continuing education offerings on-campus and online.

Throughout its history, Ryerson has challenged conventional approaches to post-secondary education. Innovative thinking – rooted in Ryerson's culture and infused in the community's values – is central to this vision.

\* The mission statement is derived from the Objects of the University as outlined in the Ryerson University Act:  
1) The advancement of learning, and the intellectual, social, moral, cultural, spiritual, and physical development of the University's students and employees, and the betterment of society. 2) The advancement of applied knowledge and

research in response to existing and emerging societal needs and in support of the cultural, economic, social, and technological development of Ontario. 3) The provision of programs of study that provide a balance between theory and application and that prepare students for careers in professional and quasi-professional fields.

# Our Values

The values that follow illustrate Ryerson's commitment to creating an open and accessible environment that is vibrant, inclusive and representative of an institution of excellence. Each of these values is important in its own right and together they serve as the foundation of the academic plan's aspirations and priorities.

*In the pursuit of knowledge,  
therein you will find life.*

Simoogit Ax̄diiwilluugooda,  
Nisga'a Nation

Translation Dr. Bert McKay



**Commitment to Excellence**



**Commitment to The Whole Person**



**Commitment to Community & Inclusion**

Excellence

## Excellence

The university strives for the highest standards in its programs, teaching and learning, SRC activity, administration and governance.

Excellence

## Academic Freedom

The university unequivocally embraces freedom of thought and expression in support of teaching, learning and SRC activity within a culture of mutual respect.

Excellence

## Integrity

The university expects students, faculty and staff to act in accord with the highest standards of conduct. The university strives to always manifest transparency, fairness and accountability in its processes of decision-making, administration and governance.

Excellence

## Enterprising

The university champions innovation and entrepreneurship, and empowers its students, faculty and staff to think creatively, take initiative and demonstrate resourcefulness.

Excellence

## Sustainability

The university takes responsibility for a shared future with the broader community, and aims to pursue environmental, social and economic sustainability through its programs, SRC activity, policies, built environment, and fiscally sound operations.

## The Whole Person

## People First

The university is committed to the success of its students, faculty and staff by creating a safe, secure and healthy environment that puts people first, is supportive of the whole person and enhances the development of physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

## The Whole Person

## Collegiality

The university fosters a collegial environment and collegial institutions where students, faculty and staff work in collaborative ways to support the university's shared mission.

## The Whole Person

## Lifelong Learning

The university encourages learning as a lifelong activity through accessible, responsive and comprehensive continuing education, and professional development and learning opportunities for students, faculty and staff.

## Community &amp; Inclusion

## Community

The university sustains its commitment to ensuring a strong sense of belonging and engagement for students, alumni, faculty and staff, and values mutual and reciprocal relationships with the broader community.

## Community &amp; Inclusion

## Inclusion

The university values the equitable, intentional and ongoing engagement of diversity within every facet of university life. It is the shared responsibility of all community members to foster a welcoming, supportive and respectful learning, teaching, research and work environment.

## Community &amp; Inclusion

## Respect for Aboriginal Perspectives

The university will continue to cultivate and develop relationships with Aboriginal communities, both within and outside the university. The campus environment will embrace and support Aboriginal learners, faculty and staff, and ensure Aboriginal people take a leading role in the advancement of Aboriginal education at Ryerson.

## Community &amp; Inclusion

## Equity

The university values the fair and just treatment of all community members through the creation of opportunities and the removal of barriers to address historic and current disadvantages for under-represented and marginalized groups.

## Community &amp; Inclusion

## Diversity

The university values and respects diversity of knowledge, worldviews and experiences that come from membership in different groups, and the contribution that diversity makes to the learning, teaching, research and work environment.

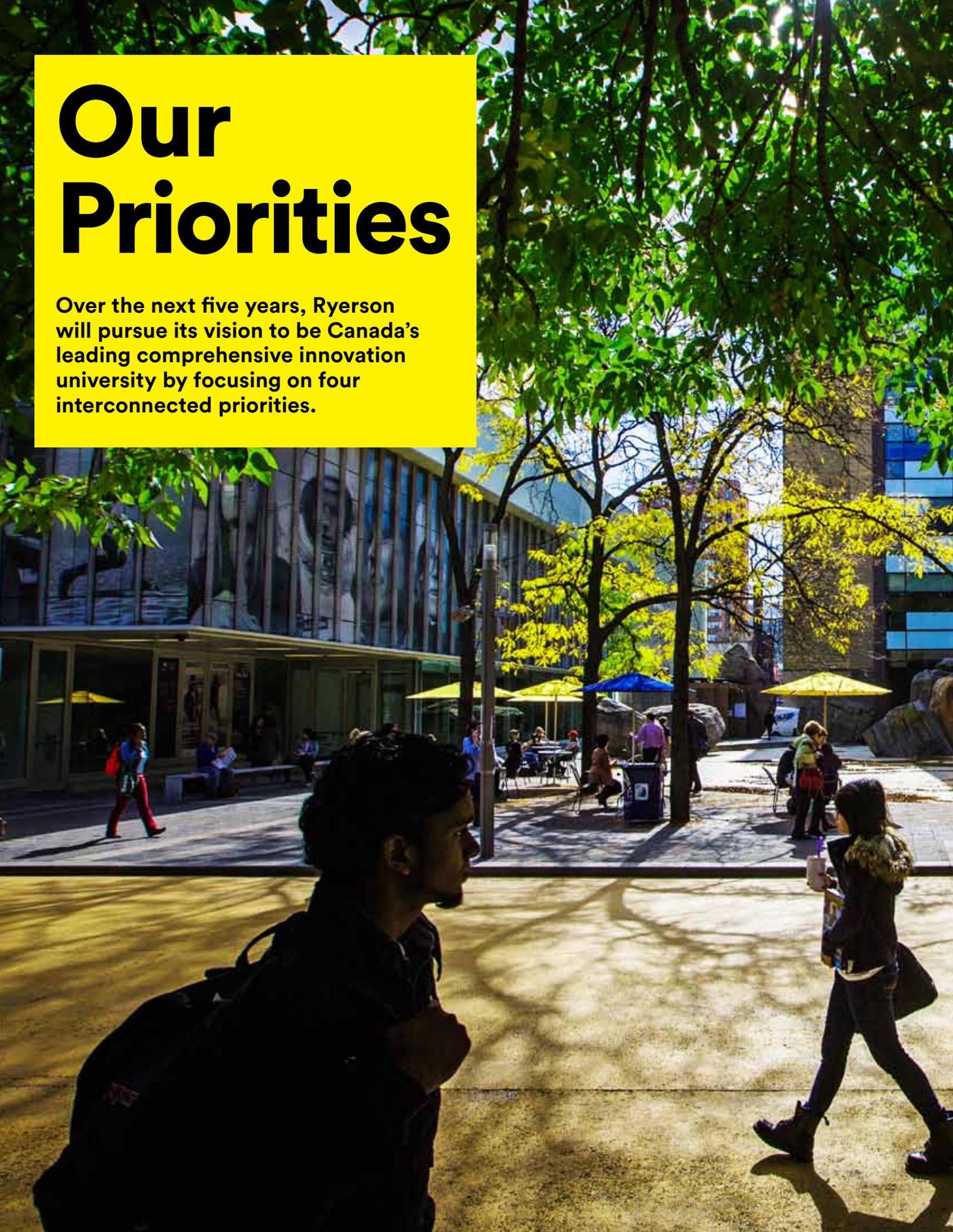
## Community &amp; Inclusion

## Access

The university is committed to providing access to education and employment opportunities at Ryerson for students, faculty and staff of all backgrounds, in particular those from marginalized and under-represented groups

# Our Priorities

Over the next five years, Ryerson will pursue its vision to be Canada's leading comprehensive innovation university by focusing on four interconnected priorities.



## ① **Enable Greater Student Engagement & Success through Exceptional Experiences**

Students are Ryerson's top priority, and are attracted by high-quality programs and learning opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. Ryerson will provide students with exceptional experiences and opportunities – inside and outside their programs and classes, locally and globally – to prepare them with the necessary skills to build thriving careers in today's knowledge economy.

This priority envisions a rich learning environment – intellectual, cultural, social, technological and physical – where students are inspired and fully engaged, and supported and encouraged to take advantage of diverse curricular and co-curricular opportunities. Faculty and staff work collaboratively to provide graduates with strong intellectual foundations, as well as transferable skills needed to succeed in careers, become responsible global citizens and enable positive change. They recognize that learning occurs through interactions with diverse faculty, industry practitioners, peers and organizations in the community, and through experiential learning and research opportunities. Active participation in a vibrant and inclusive campus life also builds a stronger sense of community for all students.

This priority stems from a shared responsibility for excellence in every aspect of Ryerson's learning environment so that all students – including undergraduate and graduate, Aboriginal, first-generation, international, adult learners and students with disabilities – can experience broad intellectual and personal growth during their academic careers, have access to the supports and services they need to succeed, and participate in an equitable and inclusive environment. Ryerson will continue fostering program and teaching excellence and will offer greater interdisciplinary opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. The university will continue enhancing education by expanding experiential learning opportunities. Recognizing that many instructors already use technology in the classroom, the university will strategically develop opportunities to increase the use of best practices in e-learning in a greater number of programs and courses.

By offering exceptional experiences and opportunities, Ryerson will make its unique approach to education a distinct advantage for undergraduate, graduate and continuing education students.

## ② **Increase SRC Excellence, Intensity & Impact**



Excellence in scholarly, research and creative activity has been fundamental to Ryerson's evolution as a comprehensive innovation university. Its SRC agenda is gaining momentum and is broadly recognized for its value and contributions to community, industry and society. Ryerson will continue to build a culture that fosters inquiry, discovery, knowledge and creative works. This commitment will support Ryerson's strong forward trajectory in research growth, further raise its reputation for high-quality research and creative endeavours, and drive innovation across sectors – all the while recognizing and celebrating the distinctive SRC strengths of its programs and faculties across disciplines.

Ryerson aspires to become one of Canada's top 10 non-medical research universities in terms of research funding, and a leader in applied SRC in collaboration with community, industry and government partners. It has led the province in research funding growth in recent years. To continue moving its SRC enterprise forward, the university aims to engage a greater number of undergraduate and graduate students and faculty members in collaborative and interdisciplinary pursuits. Attention will be placed on attracting strong researchers, external funding and partners that will support increased activity and quality. Integral to the long-term success and sustainability of a robust SRC culture are graduate programs. Ryerson will foster excellence in graduate studies in order to effectively attract and retain high-quality students and realize continued progress in its scholarly, research and creative endeavours.

Ryerson has a compelling research and innovation story to share both within the university and externally, one that speaks to its unique capabilities. This includes SRC activity targeted at tangible impacts on prosperity, culture and social development through relationships with community and industry. It includes a pronounced emphasis on creative activity. Ryerson will celebrate and communicate its SRC strengths and achievements in order to attract additional research opportunities and talent, and build recognition of the link between significant SRC pursuits and Ryerson's rising prominence as a distinguished institution.

### ③ *Foster an Innovation Ecosystem*



Ryerson's vision is to be recognized as Canada's leading comprehensive innovation university. Ryerson will foster an environment conducive to innovation, one where it can flourish on a larger scale across the university while involving more people and partners.

Inspired by its mission, Ryerson defines innovation broadly – encouraging its academic community to challenge the status quo with new solutions and to apply new ways of thinking to transform the world.

Ryerson recognizes that there are many kinds of innovators. Some people innovate for commercial reasons; others advocate new thinking and approaches designed to create positive social change – some do both. The definition above encompasses creative, cultural and social innovations that can enrich the fabric of society and improve quality of life, as well

as innovations that create new companies, products and jobs, produce novel social and civic ventures, and drive change in existing organizations. Ryerson will nurture an environment that instills creative and entrepreneurial thinking across disciplines, and supports more students, faculty and staff to become innovators who can make a positive difference. It will strive to stimulate innovation through the education, research and learning opportunities offered to students; through strengthened interdisciplinary connections; through increased partnerships with like-minded organizations; and through the university's strong commitment to continue building a robust SRC culture.

Ryerson trusts students to learn and is adding a self-motivated entrepreneurial dimension to post-secondary education through zone learning. Ryerson has already expanded multidisciplinary zone learning to include urban energy, fashion, design fabrication and transmedia, and will look for more opportunities to engage students in pursuing entrepreneurial pathways for their ideas in close collaboration with their peers, faculty mentors, and industry and community partners. Ryerson will also look for opportunities to expand zones on campus, regionally and in select locations outside Canada.

By fostering a stimulating environment, Ryerson will become a leading institution for innovation, where students, graduates and faculty have a positive and meaningful impact on the social, environmental and economic vitality of Toronto, Ontario and beyond.

## ④ **Expand Community Engagement & City Building**



Community engagement is a hallmark of Ryerson's approach to its programs, experiential learning and SRC activities. It allows Ryerson to work with and benefit those around the university, opens avenues for creating positive change in the community and contributes to Ryerson's reputation as a city-building university. It also underpins the university's internal culture. Ryerson's diverse community is its most important asset, and new ways to foster collaboration, inclusion and positive interactions across the university will be pursued.

This priority focuses on strengthening engagement in ways that move the university and the city forward together. It will expand connections to community, government and industry organizations to create greater opportunities for academic and SRC interaction and collaboration, student engagement, and international reach and influence. Ryerson will be a leader in the university sector with city-building efforts that have a positive local and regional impact.

Community engagement also impacts philanthropy. A strong sense of community and shared belonging among students, faculty, staff, alumni and the broader public is key in cultivating the impetus to give back. Through collaborative efforts, Ryerson will endeavour to build a stronger culture of philanthropy to help realize the vision of the academic plan. The university community will reach out to alumni, individuals and external organizations with meaningful opportunities for involvement that can contribute to building a common sense of purpose and commitment to the university's future.

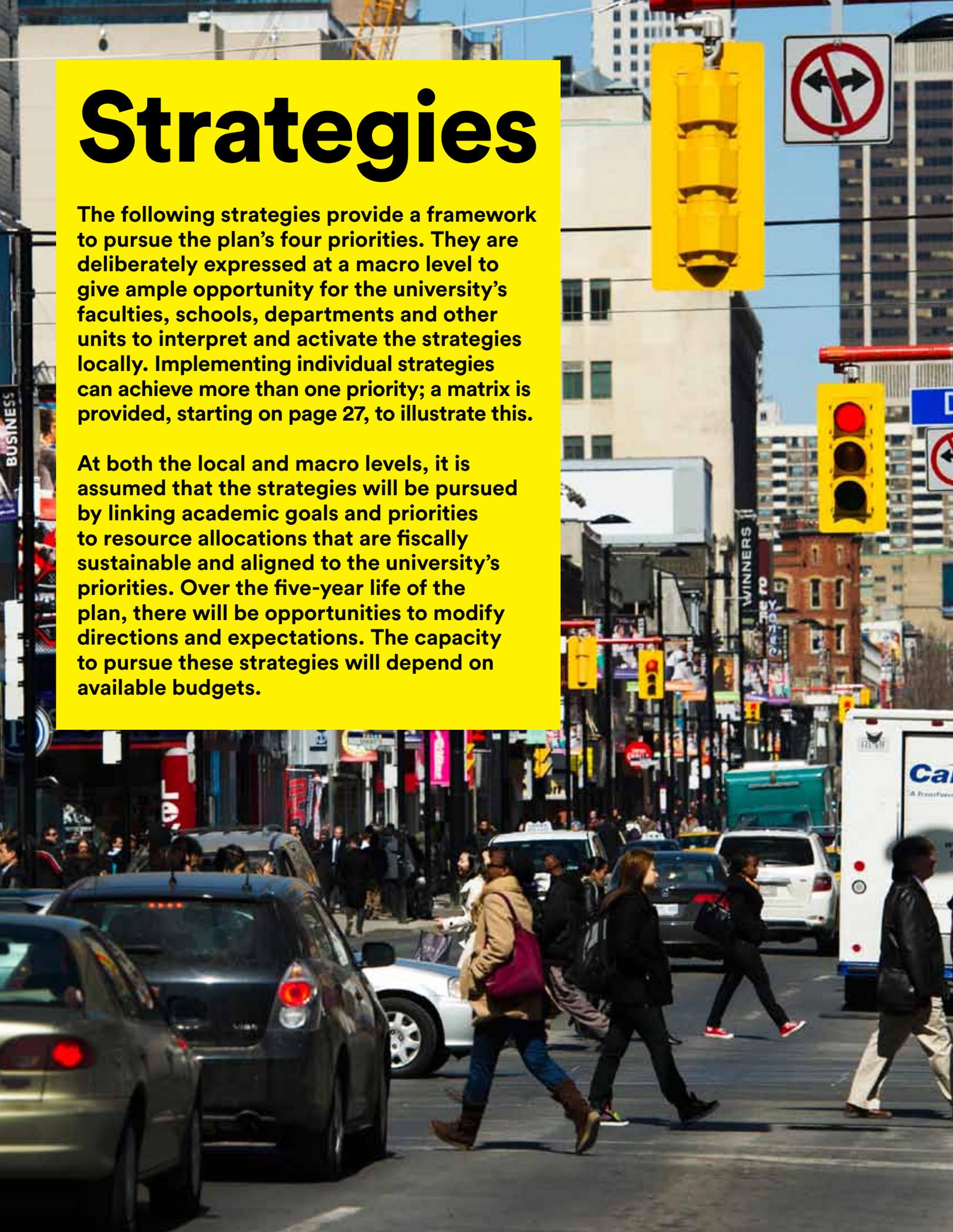
Ryerson has many opportunities to augment both the level of local engagement and its influence as a city builder. Expanding external engagement will bring new opportunities to the university, increase the reciprocal benefits in the community and strengthen connections with distinct groups, such as Aboriginal communities. Ryerson is revitalizing its campus and surrounding neighbourhood and is recognized as a leading institution that takes pride and ownership in its city's advancement. While continuing to realize the vision of its Master Plan, Ryerson is explicitly expanding the notion of city building to include its community of scholars, innovators and creative practitioners who participate in civic issues and contribute their intellectual capital to the cultural and social well-being – and economic vitality – of the city, province and country.

While the mutual benefits of local engagement are many, Ryerson is also aware of its responsibilities as a global citizen. Ryerson has a highly diverse community of students, faculty, staff and alumni with meaningful connections to countries around the world. Combining the strength of its diversity with its strong history of external engagement, Ryerson can establish greater international reach and influence by partnering with like-minded organizations and establishing joint programs with international institutions. Increasing global connections will expand Ryerson's international focus, create new opportunities for students and faculty, and allow Ryerson to bring new talent to its programs and the GTA.

# Strategies

The following strategies provide a framework to pursue the plan's four priorities. They are deliberately expressed at a macro level to give ample opportunity for the university's faculties, schools, departments and other units to interpret and activate the strategies locally. Implementing individual strategies can achieve more than one priority; a matrix is provided, starting on page 27, to illustrate this.

At both the local and macro levels, it is assumed that the strategies will be pursued by linking academic goals and priorities to resource allocations that are fiscally sustainable and aligned to the university's priorities. Over the five-year life of the plan, there will be opportunities to modify directions and expectations. The capacity to pursue these strategies will depend on available budgets.



# Working Together

***Ryerson's talented faculty and staff will continue to work together to achieve the priorities of the academic plan and the university.***

All academic and functional units across the university play important roles in moving the university forward. Diverse teams of students, faculty and staff strengthen the academic environment and contribute to a more inclusive community. Diversity also helps students, faculty and staff develop cross-cultural competencies that enable professional success and responsible citizenship. Ryerson encourages a common purpose, bringing together disparate ideas and capabilities that invigorate the university as a whole.

Ryerson's vision of being a leading innovation university extends to how its faculty and staff think, act and get things done. The university will continue cultivating a collegial environment that takes advantage of the enterprising ideas of experienced faculty and staff to increase teaching, learning, SRC and operational excellence. Experimentation and collaboration among diverse teams will be encouraged to ensure that structures, systems, processes and services remain flexible, nimble and responsive as the needs of the university change. Potential enhancements and modernizations to the university's IT assets, digital communication channels and enterprise platforms will be evaluated, taking into account Ryerson's reputation for strong digital, design and technology capabilities.

The university will also consider how existing space might be better used and shared. When future opportunities are presented to build or update facilities, consideration should be given to developing spaces that reflect the principles of the Master Plan, encourage collaboration and foster cross-disciplinary interactions that spark creativity and innovation.

## 01 Strategy Working Together

Attract and retain high-quality faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds.



## 02 Strategy Working Together

Assess administrative structures, processes and services to ensure ongoing effectiveness of university assets, support for academic programming and SRC activity, and enhanced space utilization.

### 03 Strategy *Exceptional Experiences*

Continue the ongoing evolution of Ryerson's high-quality curriculum, so that programming and its delivery remain innovative and responsive to students. Courses will be made more accessible, students will be given more choice, and transferability will be enhanced.



### 04 Strategy *Exceptional Experiences*

Foster greater interdisciplinary SRC activity, curriculum and programs – including the continued evolution of the curriculum model – giving consideration to development, delivery, administration, support and related policies.

### 05 Strategy *Exceptional Experiences*

Evolve and expand experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.

## Exceptional Experiences

***Ryerson will foster even greater student engagement and success by offering exceptional experiences inside and outside the classroom.***

Ryerson is committed to helping students succeed and invests significant resources in building a supportive learning environment.

The university will continue to strengthen and nurture existing programs, ensuring above all else that they remain current and of high quality. Program revisions will be made more flexible to respond to external developments in professions, industries and scholarly fields. Ryerson will also explore new program possibilities, including professional master's degrees, that respond to student and societal demand in such areas as health and law.

Student recruitment and retention, flexible course scheduling, and access and transfer pathways remain important considerations in creating exceptional learning experiences. Through the ongoing Curriculum Renewal Initiative, Ryerson will give students greater choice to suit their career goals. The university will also emphasize curriculum innovation and will do more to support the delivery of interdisciplinary programs and SRC activity, minimizing the structural barriers that inhibit them.

Students will continue to acquire strong foundational knowledge and practical skills within their disciplines and through experiential learning opportunities. The university will provide undergraduate and graduate students with increased opportunities to develop the broad transferrable knowledge and competencies, including hard and soft skills, that enable successful career building and transitioning. Ryerson's zone learning – a key driver in the university's innovation ecosystem – will give students dedicated support and spaces for taking their ideas to the next level, and encourage entrepreneurial thinking. All students, regardless of career ambitions, stand to benefit from zone learning. It teaches critical life skills such as the ability to take smart, calculated risks and the resiliency to learn from mistakes.

Active student engagement and a welcoming, vibrant university life can make a tremendous difference to students' learning. The university will offer expanded co-curricular activities and intramural and recreation programs; encourage involvement in and collaboration between student organizations and clubs, competitions at the national and international levels, and other

activities led by students and staff; create shared spaces where students will want to spend time with their peers; and offer a nationally recognized program of varsity athletics.

Ryerson is experiencing increasing demand for services that help students complete their studies, including support for mental well-being. Ryerson will make strong efforts to offer the right level and type of support for all students.

## Access

***Ryerson will continue to provide access to post-secondary education and support for adult learners and under-represented groups.***

Supporting access to education and lifelong learning is part of Ryerson's mission and reflects its commitment to serve society. The university will continue to make opportunities available to those desiring to change careers, pursue advanced training and build brighter futures through education. Access to education is delivered through The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, which offers many of its courses through distance education, and through programs and initiatives that bridge gaps to university education for members of under-represented groups. Initiatives to ease transitions for students transferring to or from Ryerson will also be supported.

### 06 Strategy Exceptional Experiences

Offer services, supports, spaces and improved engagement opportunities that enable student success at all levels, encourage high retention, and facilitate the timely completion of students' academic goals.



### 07 Strategy Access

Develop access and program initiatives to support under-represented groups, including Aboriginal students, first-generation students, students with disabilities and internationally educated professionals.

### 08 Strategy Access

Encourage partnership between academic departments and The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education to support growth in continuing education through on-campus and distance offerings.

### 09 Strategy Access

Enhance pathways and transition support for students transferring from other post-secondary institutions, and provide appropriate transfer credit for students' prior learning.

## 10 Strategy Teaching & Learning

Recognize high-quality teaching and provide opportunities for faculty, instructors, and teaching and graduate assistants to continually develop their teaching practices and skills, and encourage the use of new and diverse learning and teaching methods.

## 11 Strategy Teaching & Learning

Develop a university-wide blended e-learning strategy, which incorporates the principles of inclusive design and accessibility, in order to expand technology-enhanced and high-quality online offerings.

## 12 Strategy Teaching & Learning

Encourage faculty to increasingly incorporate SRC activity into classroom learning, and to provide greater opportunities for undergraduate and graduate student involvement with research.

## 13 Strategy Teaching & Learning

Enhance the library's role as a provider of exceptional learning spaces, quality digital and physical collections, and innovative services for teaching, learning, research and collaboration.

# Teaching & Learning

***Ryerson will continue to distinguish itself through teaching and learning excellence.***

The university already offers a robust learning and teaching program and popular teaching workshops to help faculty members, instructors and teaching assistants develop their teaching skills and better achieve learning outcomes. The university will support faculty in the use of new technologies and develop best practices for high-quality distance education and hybrid learning as part of a blended learning strategy.

Consideration will also be given, in learning and teaching programs, of how best to support faculty members' development to meet students' changing needs and expectations, to provide an inclusive learning environment and to contribute to students' experiences inside and outside the classroom. Interactions with faculty translate into valuable learning experiences and build relationships that establish a solid foundation for success in upper-years, create engaged alumni and support retention.

The university recognizes that research and external connections to community and industry are drivers in teaching and learning excellence. Stronger linkages between the teaching and research enterprises will engage undergraduate and graduate students and support greater SRC intensity, benefitting the university as a whole. Faculty members will also be encouraged to continue to cultivate and expand external connections in support of Ryerson's educational and SRC mandate.

Ryerson's library plays a foundational role in connecting students, faculty and staff from across disciplines, and has long been a partner in student success and engagement, knowledge creation and dissemination, and technology-enhanced learning. The Student Learning Centre will provide the library with new spaces and modalities for collaboration with academic partners to deliver innovative services that encourage productive multidisciplinary interactions and intensify students' out-of-class learning experiences.

# Graduate Education

## *Ryerson will continue to strengthen graduate education.*

In addition to the student-oriented strategies discussed on page 17, which apply to graduate students as well as undergraduates, the strategies described in this section are specifically designed to support the continued development, administration and delivery of graduate education, and enable the strategic expansion of master's and PhD programs to meet the demand for highly qualified personnel in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. There is recognition that graduate education needs coordinated structures and a funding model that better support its delivery.

Graduate students are enriched by their programs. They develop essential research and professional skills, play an integral and vital role in faculty SRC activities and, in turn, receive mentoring, supervision, training and support. As such, stronger linkages between graduate education and research are central to the long-term success and sustainability of a robust SRC culture at Ryerson.

## **14** Strategy *Graduate Education*

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Attract top graduate students by developing a strategic approach to domestic and international recruitment, and fostering excellence in graduate student supervision.

## **15** Strategy *Graduate Education*

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Strengthen graduate education by introducing a new funding allocation mechanism, identifying ways to improve the administration and delivery of graduate education, and implementing policies that support program quality and timely program completion.

## **16** Strategy *Graduate Education*

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Continue master's and doctoral program development subject to appropriate government funding.

## 17 Strategy SRC Activities

Increase SRC quality, participation and funding by providing a range of supports suited to researchers at every stage of the research process and throughout their careers.

## 18 Strategy SRC Activities

Streamline administrative structures, processes and resources to strengthen Ryerson's research culture.

## 19 Strategy SRC Activities

Expand SRC partnerships and sponsored research with industry, government and community organizations as well as other academic institutions – locally, nationally and internationally – to drive innovation and increase socio-economic impacts.

## 20 Strategy SRC Activities

Strengthen collaboration across the university and with partners on cross-disciplinary themes by leveraging expertise across disciplines to expand commercialization, knowledge translation and mobilization capacity of researchers and the university.



# SRC Activities

***Ryerson will increase the excellence, intensity and impact of its SRC activities.***

Ryerson's SRC activity continues to gain momentum. External funding doubled between 2008 and 2013, and Ryerson's share of increasingly competitive Tri-Council funding continues to grow. Meanwhile, the research landscape is changing. With increased attention being paid to Canada's "innovation gap," the focus on demonstrating the impact and relevance of university-based research is intensifying. External funding is shifting toward collaborative projects and moving away from traditional Tri-Council sources. As a result, the internal administrative structures that are needed to support SRC activity are changing.

Sustaining the university's research trajectory will require increased research intensity across all disciplines. To increase intensity and advance excellence, the university will offer support to researchers at every stage of the process, taking into account the changing funding landscape.

Strengthening institutional supports for SRC activity and ingrain its importance in Ryerson's culture at all levels is essential to the next stage of the university's evolution. As such, the university will endeavour to streamline administrative structures, processes and resources. Recruiting efforts will focus on the strategic hiring of research-intensive faculty and, as noted in the section on graduate education, efforts will be made to attract additional high-quality graduate students who will broadly contribute to and support Ryerson's growing SRC activity.

To achieve excellence, intensity and impact, the university will strengthen collaboration across the university and with partners on cross-disciplinary themes, including:

- Digital Media and Technology
- Energy and Sustainability
- Health and Well-Being
- Technological and Industrial Innovation
- City Building and Social Justice
- Design, Culture and Creative Industries
- Management, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness
- Teaching and Learning for the New Economy

Ryerson also aims to become a leader in applied SRC activities in collaboration with private- and public-sector partners. To this end, the university will pursue increased external funding and the continued development of collaborations with leading institutions domestically and internationally.

The success of Ryerson's SRC agenda will improve its performance against standard research metrics such as publication and citation measures, strengthen its reputation, attract additional research opportunities and talent, and perpetuate a culture of rigorous SRC activity. The university will work to better disseminate its research and creative successes and promote its contributions to society.

## Innovation Initiatives

***Ryerson will build an innovation ecosystem where students, faculty and staff can connect with each other and with external partners to learn how to transform their ideas into practical innovations.***

This includes civic, cultural and social innovations that enrich the fabric of society and improve quality of life, as well as innovations that create new jobs and drive change.

Innovation at Ryerson is fed by academic programs and SRC activity, more than 100 labs, institutes and research centres, and its pioneering zone learning model, which is helping students to become innovators, entrepreneurs and creative problem-solvers. The university will look for opportunities to increase the synergy among these elements in ways that accelerate change, involve more stakeholders, and attract leading community, industry and government partners.

Multidisciplinary zones will continue to be developed, with opportunities for students and faculty to work with entrepreneurs in residence, visiting fellows, industry partners and practitioners (including alumni). Zone learning's ongoing integration into programs through the optional specialization will allow students from a wide range of disciplines to participate. The university will also seek to expand zone learning opportunities and other innovative and entrepreneurial activities locally, nationally and internationally.

### 21 Strategy SRC Activities

Support increased research dissemination through traditional and non-traditional channels, and publicize the SRC achievements of Ryerson faculty and students to further build reputation and attract high-quality students, faculty and partners.

### 22 Strategy Innovation Initiatives

Implement financially sustainable mechanisms and initiatives to leverage and coordinate entrepreneurship and innovation-building activities across the university, and provide structures, frameworks and collaborative spaces to permit and support multidisciplinary participation.

### 23 Strategy Innovation Initiatives

Support and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation across a greater number of disciplines through new initiatives that will complement the curriculum.

### 24 Strategy Innovation Initiatives

Develop and expand Ryerson's experiential zone learning concept in a manner that encourages the participation of students and faculty from a greater number of disciplines.



## 25 Strategy Partnerships, Community Engagement & City Building

Foster a culture of philanthropy through all of the university's constituent communities, and seek increased engagement with donors to support and realize the university's priorities.

## 26 Strategy Partnerships, Community Engagement & City Building

Create transitional pathways leading current students to become engaged alumni who can remain involved in the university after graduation

## 27 Strategy Partnerships, Community Engagement & City Building

Cultivate relationships with Aboriginal communities and students to create an educational environment that embraces and supports Aboriginal perspectives and experiences, and builds community for Aboriginal people.



## 28 Strategy Partnerships, Community Engagement & City Building

Develop a university-wide community engagement and communications strategy that values equity, diversity and inclusion; leverages current engagement activity; and builds a more visible Ryerson presence in particular communities.

# Partnerships, Community Engagement & City Building

***Ryerson will seek expanded connections with external organizations and communities, enriching the university and enhancing the cultural and social well-being – and economic vitality – of Toronto and beyond.***

The strategies below are intentionally broad to account for the wide-ranging benefits of community engagement.

### Culture of Philanthropy

Increased philanthropy is essential to the university's ability to realize its ambitions. Donor support enhances the teaching and learning agenda and faculty research, builds and improves campus infrastructure, provides financial assistance to students and helps to build a strong varsity athletics program. Ryerson will work to foster a culture of philanthropy by expanding connections with alumni, individuals and external organizations, and by involving them in the life of the university.

Alumni are the university's greatest accomplishment and act as ambassadors, mentors and representatives in the community. The process of building loyal and engaged alumni begins with exceptional student experiences and with connections to programs, faculty and campus life. Ryerson's students become graduates and alumni who are committed to the university and its success, and who contribute to the university's reputation.

### Local Engagement and City Building

Ryerson will expand its external engagement, including with Aboriginal communities, and develop a university-wide strategic community engagement and communications plan that values equity, diversity and inclusion; is based on collaborative and mutually beneficial interactions; leverages current engagement activity; and builds a more visible presence for Ryerson in particular communities. This will allow the university community to better contribute its knowledge, advocate for positive social change and help develop new opportunities for the city.

The university will reach out to the community in the GTA and beyond to develop more extensive relationships with schools, community organizations, industry and employers. This will result in enhanced opportunities for interaction, collaboration and mentoring in programs and SRC activities. Ryerson's downtown location is within easy reach of major institutions, industries, government and community agencies. This will

allow the university to build more extensive academic and SRC relationships and to bring Toronto's leaders into its classrooms and forums.

Students, faculty and staff will be encouraged to participate in community, civic and volunteer activities to expand Ryerson's positive influence and impact on civic issues.

### **International Outreach and Engagement**

By serving as an academic partner to diverse organizations around the world, Ryerson can build its reputation as an organization that attracts new talent, connections and opportunities to the GTA through its academic programs, SRC activity and innovation initiatives. International partnerships with academic institutions and organizations also enable students and faculty to study and work abroad, deepening cross-cultural awareness and fostering global perspectives.

Through distance education and other initiatives, Ryerson will reach out strategically to emerging markets and developing societies where students and faculty collaborate with their peers in devising solutions for global challenges. The transition to a more global perspective can be assisted by technologies that bring international experts and issues into classrooms and labs, and through partnerships with like-minded institutions around the world.

## **29**

### **Strategy Partnerships, Community Engagement & City Building**

Expand engagement with local, national and international external organizations to enrich student experiences and inclusion, increase civic engagement, and create valuable academic, research and innovation opportunities that contribute to Ryerson's profile and impact as a city-building university.

# A Passionate Community

This is a true community plan. The extensive consultation process undertaken in developing the plan and the high level of engagement are a testament to the passion and dedication of Ryerson's academic community and are indicative of the university's forward trajectory.

Consultation participants included students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the Senate and Board of Governors, as well as external industry and community partners. A community consultation blog was launched to facilitate online discussions and, for each phase of consultation, a discussion paper was developed and shared widely.

## Phase 01

Consultations on Future Directions

October – December 2013

**40**

Meetings

**03**

Community-Wide Town Halls

**870**

Participants

**20**

Written Submissions Received

## Phase 02

Consultations on Proposed Priorities & Strategies

February – March 2014

**20**

Meetings

**03**

Community-Wide Town Halls

**800**

Participants

**30**

Written Submissions Received

## Measuring Success

*To support the launch and ongoing implementation of the academic plan, the University Planning Office will develop metrics and performance indicators to help the university and individual units measure their progress in meeting the plan's strategic priorities.*

The indicators and metrics chosen will provide the flexibility to evolve over the life of the plan. They will be shared with the community in a companion document. There will be an annual update on the progress of the plan, including high-level reports to the Senate and Board of Governors, which will require each unit to assess how successful they have been in meeting the university's and their own strategic priorities. The University Planning Office will support faculties, departments and schools, and other units in the development of their individual plans and will develop the tools and timelines for reporting on individual unit plans.

## Integrated Planning

*The university leadership commits itself to an environment of integrated planning that coordinates advancement efforts, strategic research priorities, space allocation and building programs, human resources, and financial and other services in support of Ryerson's academic mission.*

The strategies in the plan establish a general framework from which individual academic and administrative units build their own strategic or academic plans. It establishes parameters for the many complementary planning exercises as well as those decision-making and priority-setting exercises that are essential in successful contemporary universities such as Ryerson.

**Next Steps →**

All academic and administrative units will prepare or renew individual plans that support the university's future direction as set out in the academic plan. Units set goals and objectives for their respective areas and act on those strategies in the academic plan that are relevant to them. Faculty and unit plans view the academic plan through the lens of local norms, culture and aspirations, take into account developmental plans that are part of the periodic program review process, and include strategic investment requests needed to implement new initiatives. The University Planning Office will develop tools and timelines for developing individual academic plans.

## Advisory Group

*At the outset of the consultation process, the provost formed an advisory group of select faculty members and staff to provide additional forward-thinking insight. Members are recognized below for their outstanding contributions to the plan's development.*

**Martin Antony**  
Chair, Department of Psychology

**John Austin**  
Executive Director, Student Affairs

**Lisa Barnoff**  
Director, School of Social Work

**Randy Boyagoda**  
Director, Zone Learning

**David Checkland**  
Professor, Department of Philosophy

**Christopher De Sousa**  
Director, School of Urban and Regional Planning

**John Enright**  
Interim Associate Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science

**Chris Evans**  
Vice-Provost, Academic

**Charles Falzon**  
Chair, The RTA School of Media

**Cecile Farnum**  
Librarian, Ryerson University Library and Archives

**Desmond Glynn**  
Senior Program Director, The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education

**Murtaza Haider**  
Associate Dean, Ted Rogers School of Management

**Darrick Heyd**  
Associate Dean, Faculty of Science

**Andrew Hunter**  
Chair, Department of Philosophy

**Michael Kolios**  
Associate Dean, Faculty of Science

**Lynn Lavallée**  
Associate Director, School of Social Work

**Ali Lohi**  
Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering

**Jennifer MacInnis**  
Legal Counsel and Senior Director, Applied Research and Commercialization

**Kelly MacKay**  
Professor, Ted Rogers School of Hospitality and Tourism Management

**Ana Pejović-Milić**  
Chair, Department of Physics

**Neil Thomlinson**  
Professor, Department of Politics and Public Administration

**David Valliere**  
Chair, Department of Entrepreneurship and Strategy

**Paul Walsh**  
Professor, Department of Aerospace Engineering

**Nancy Walton**  
Director, E-Learning

**Lois Weinthal**  
Chair, School of Interior Design

*September 24, 2014  
Printer-friendly version*

# Priorities

- ① **Enable Greater Student Engagement & Success through Exceptional Experiences**
- ② **Increase SRC Excellence, Intensity & Impact**
- ③ **Foster an Innovation Ecosystem**
- ④ **Expand Community Engagement & City Building**

## 01 ① ② ③ ④

Attract and retain high-quality faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds.

## 02 ① ② ③ ④

Assess administrative structures, processes and services to ensure ongoing effectiveness of university assets, support for academic programming and SRC activity, and enhanced space utilization.

## 03 ① ② ③ ④

Continue the ongoing evolution of Ryerson’s high-quality curriculum, so that programming and its delivery remain innovative and responsive to students. Courses will be made more accessible, students will be given more choice, and transferability will be enhanced.

## 04 ① ② ③ ④

Foster greater interdisciplinary SRC activity, curriculum and programs – including the continued evolution of the curriculum model – giving consideration to development, delivery, administration, support and related policies.

## 05 ① ② ③ ④

Evolve and expand experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.

## 06 ① ② ③ ④

Offer services, supports, spaces and improved engagement opportunities that enable student success at all levels, encourage high retention, and facilitate the timely completion of students’ academic goals.

## 07 ① ② ③ ④

Develop access and program initiatives to support under-represented groups, including Aboriginal students, first-generation students, students with disabilities and internationally educated professionals.

## 08 ① ② ③ ④

Encourage partnership between academic departments and The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education to support growth in continuing education through on-campus and distance offerings.

**09** ① ② ③ ④

Enhance pathways and transition support for students transferring from other post-secondary institutions, and provide appropriate transfer credit for students' prior learning.

**10** ① ② ③ ④

Recognize high-quality teaching and provide opportunities for faculty, instructors, and teaching and graduate assistants to continually develop their teaching practices and skills, and encourage the use of new and diverse learning and teaching methods.

**11** ① ② ③ ④

Develop a university-wide blended e-learning strategy, which incorporates the principles of inclusive design and accessibility, in order to expand technology-enhanced and high-quality online offerings.

**12** ① ② ③ ④

Encourage faculty to increasingly incorporate SRC activity into classroom learning, and to provide greater opportunities for undergraduate and graduate student involvement with research.

**13** ① ② ③ ④

Enhance the Library's role as a provider of exceptional learning spaces, quality digital and physical collections, and innovative services for teaching, learning, research and collaboration.

**14** ① ② ③ ④

Attract top graduate students by developing a strategic approach to domestic and international recruitment, and fostering excellence in graduate student supervision.

**15** ① ② ③ ④

Strengthen graduate education by introducing a new funding allocation mechanism, identifying ways to improve the administration and delivery of graduate education, and implementing policies that support program quality and timely program completion.

**16** ① ② ③ ④

Continue master's and doctoral program development subject to appropriate government funding.

**17** ① ② ③ ④

Increase SRC quality, participation and funding by providing a range of supports suited to researchers at every stage of the research process and throughout their careers.

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Office of the Provost and  
Vice President Academic  
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