



EMBRACE AGING

News from the RTO/ERO Foundation



RTO/ERO Foundation Grants Announcement

The RTO/ERO Foundation has announced the recipients of its annual grant program. The announcement was made by Board Chair Joanne Murphy at the RTO/ERO annual Spring Senate event. A total funding pool of \$75,000, made available through the fundraising efforts of the Foundation in 2018, has been allocated to two projects, specifically aimed at addressing the growing problem of social isolation among Canadian seniors.

One grant, in the amount of \$50,000, has been awarded to a collaboration between two organizations who will co-manage the project; the National Institute on Ageing, Ryerson University (NIA) and the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE). *Establishing Best Policies and Practices for Understanding and Addressing Social Isolation in Older Canadians*, aims to synthesize and catalogue best policies and practices, nationally and internationally, with respect to social isolation.

The second grant, in the amount of \$25,000 is awarded to Catholic Family Services Peel-Dufferin for a project entitled *Peel Senior Connectors*. The initiative aims to reach isolated seniors at community outreach locations, through current one-on-one support systems and at health care facilities.

We were thrilled this year with the overwhelming number of proposals we received, which is evidence that our program has become well-known within the granting sector. Additionally, we were so impressed with the rigor that was applied to methodology and measurement, and the truly exceptional originality and ambition that we saw in nearly all the proposals we received. The final decision is always difficult and this year was no exception.

Congratulations to both grant recipients and thank you to all our donors who help make the grant program an annual success.



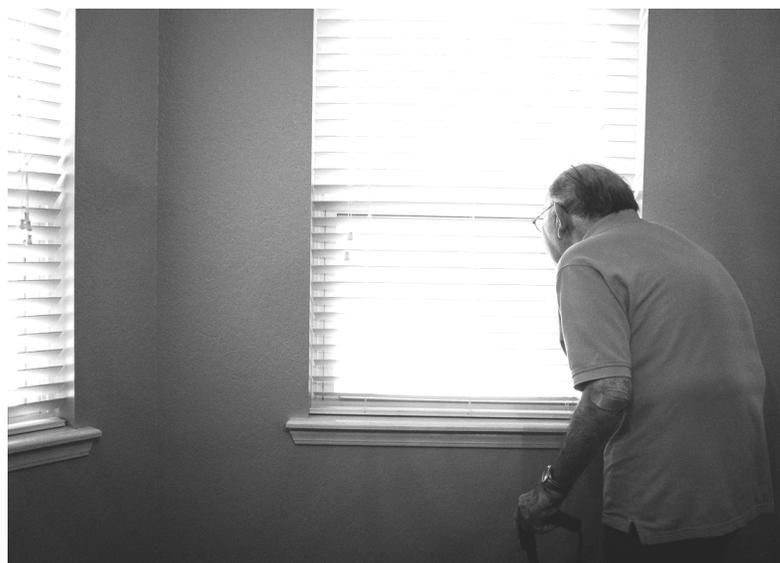
Social Isolation Awareness Month

The negative impact that social isolation has on individuals and communities is well documented. Social isolation can lead to elder abuse, reduced social skills and poor mental and physical health. Overcoming these barriers requires a coordinated approach from a variety of community organizations and services – to identify vulnerable, isolated seniors and support them to make connections with others in their community.

To help address the issue, the RTO/ERO Foundation named October 2018 the first ever Social Isolation Awareness Month. This included a fundraising campaign, webinar series and an awareness raising initiative called *Engage: End Isolation*.

The campaign asks Canadians to sign up to receive a “challenge email” every Tuesday in October. Weekly challenges included awareness measures and tips for addressing and preventing social isolation such as:

- Scheduling a weekly call with a senior
- Offering to help with seasonal chores
- Helping a senior set up and/or fix tech devices
- Sharing success stories on social media



Social isolation is the #1 emerging issue among Canadian seniors.

Recent studies show that 24% of Canadians over 65 report feeling socially isolated.

A total of 650 Canadians signed up for the campaign last year. We are excited to launch it again this fall and are hoping the campaign continues to grow. Registration will open in August.

Please visit the RTO/ERO Foundation website at www.embrace-aging.ca to learn more about the *Engage: End Isolation* campaign.



Welcoming our new Board members

The RTO/ERO Foundation's Board of Directors is a small group of volunteers, responsible for financial and strategic oversight and who are accountable to our donors. We are pleased to welcome two new members who have recently joined the Board.

Brent Stucke joins the Foundation Board with 25 years' experience in the technology field as a business owner and entrepreneur. Brent is Chairman and Founder of Venngo Inc., Canada's leading provider of discount program solutions for association, member, customer and employee-based groups. Brent is excited to join the Board to help the organization achieve its short and long term goals and ultimately to benefit the lives of the aging population across Canada.

Margaret Werkhoven retired from the Hastings & Prince Edward District School Board in 1999 after a 35-year career as a secondary school teacher, vice principal and superintendent. She joined the RTO/ERO District 19 Executive the same year. Margaret serves on the Provincial Governance Committee and as Senate speaker. She believes that the Foundation is an important RTO/ERO asset and welcomes the opportunity to work with other Board members to broaden its influence and reach.



Webinar Series Launch

The Foundation's online webinar series was introduced during last year's inaugural Social Isolation Awareness Month. Now in its second year, we have expanded the series to include more webinar episodes and a wider variety of subjects and speakers.

Webinars are scheduled from June through November and include presentations from Raza Mirza and Lori Schindel Martin, as well as RTO/ERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine, Dr. Paula Rochon and RTO/ERO Chief Executive Officer, Jim Grieve.

You will receive more detail and registration information in the coming months, so please attend one or more of our webinars!

Help us be more efficient

In an ongoing effort to maximize operating efficiency, the Foundation aims to communicate with our donors via email as much as possible. An e-newsletter for example is deployed at a lower cost than a hardcopy newsletter that incurs print and postage costs.

Many people do elect to receive communications in print form and we are happy to honour that preference.

If you would like to receive this newsletter by email as opposed to a print copy, please contact the Foundation at foundation@rto-ero.org or by phone at 1-800-361-9888 ext. 271.



The Making of a Grant

While on the surface it may appear that awarding money to fund research is a simple process, it is far from the reality of a comprehensive granting program. Each Foundation granting cycle begins with a review of our current and past grants and key learnings. We consult with a broad network of experts – former grantees and applicants, researchers, academics and community organizations – to learn about their needs and gain a better understanding of current research and programming.

Funding criteria are developed for each granting envelope and a call for proposals is distributed broadly. Prospective grantees are asked to focus their proposals on multiple measures including among others, project objectives, methodology, evaluation, sustainability and budget.

For each granting cycle we bring together experts in the specific funding area, along with members of the Foundation Board of Directors, who participate in a series of scoring sessions,

ending with a full meeting of the review panel to discuss and rank proposals. Top ranked proposals are reviewed by the Foundation Board, who approve the final funding. Projects must receive an ethics approval from their institution prior to the release of funds.

The granting cycle continues with the creation of longer term partnerships with our grantees. The tools, knowledge and programs created through each project are made available via the Foundation to RTO/ERO members and others. This results in articles, educational workshops and webinars, conference presentations and many other forms of knowledge sharing.

With each granting cycle the Foundation continues to expand its network of researchers, educators and community activators, and further build its influence and reputation as a credible source of information that members and seniors can rely on.

Have a safe and happy summer

Summer in Canada is far too short, but its fleeting nature is part of what makes it so special. Whatever your favorite summer activity, whether gardening, fishing, spending time at the cottage or enjoying the patio at your local restaurant or cafe, please relish every moment. Wishing you a safe, active and memorable summer from your friends at the RTO/ERO Foundation.

