



Final Report of the Ryerson Public Policy Task Force

September 2021

Ryerson
University

Acknowledgements

The work of the Task Force took place at a unique moment, and the realities of the pandemic meant that our work was conducted virtually.

We were all highly attuned to the cascading COVID-19-related economic, social and public health crises that were deepening structural inequities within Canada and revealing significant shortcomings in the country's public policy architecture. We have no doubt that the COVID-19 context informed our deliberations. We also know that we were unfortunately unable to engage in more comprehensive community consultations.

Throughout our time leading the Task Force, we were often asked by colleagues whether there was a particular problem we were being asked to solve. There was not. Instead, we were focused on whether there are opportunities that Ryerson can seize, gaps that need to be filled, and how the University can support and build on the strength of the work that is already being done.

During our deliberations, we learned a great deal about the incredible work of our colleagues and students across the University. We were reinforced in our belief that Ryerson is a place where people come together to solve problems in ways that make lives better.

We are very grateful for the contributions of Task Force members. Our recommendations have been informed by their engagement, expertise and wisdom, as well as the contributions of external guests, informal outreach across the Ryerson community and responses to our institutional survey.

On a very personal note, we appreciate that Task Force members took time away from their important work to help us think through how Ryerson can do even more. We hope that they see their advice and wisdom reflected in these pages in a manner that respects their contributions.

We thank our project team, without whom this Report would not have been possible: Chloe Langlois, Natalie Tiwari and Monica Da Re did most of the organizing, research and much of the writing that went into the process throughout the last year. We were fortunate to have such a talented team working with us. We also thank VPRI Liss and President Lachemi for asking us to lead this important work.

Naomi Adelson & Matthew Mendelsohn

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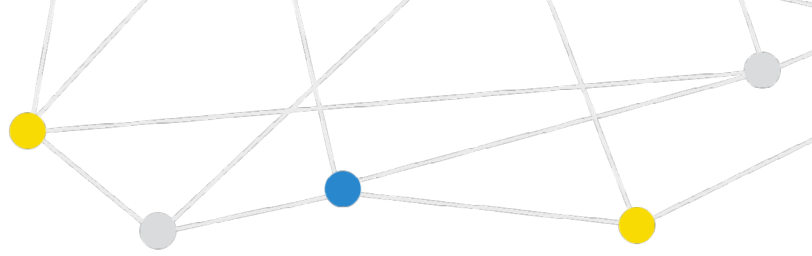
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Executive Summary



The Ryerson Public Policy Task Force was established to identify how to increase Ryerson’s capacity to shape public policy dialogue and inform policy-making, and how to grow Ryerson’s reputation as a place where research is used to confront complex public policy problems and improve lives.

From October 2020 to May 2021, the members of the Task Force learned about best practices and innovative models within Ryerson, as well as at other universities in Canada and internationally.

The Task Force learned that Ryerson faculty and affiliated centres are currently undertaking extraordinary research, education, engagement and advocacy that have a positive impact on the communities we serve. The Task Force explored the question of how the University can do even more to support this work and what additional steps might be explored for Ryerson on its path toward national and global leadership.

Ryerson’s strengths emerged clearly during our deliberations: research excellence, policy expertise, capacity for community engagement, a diverse student body, a history of activism, an entrepreneurial ethos, capacity for partnership, belief in interdisciplinary work, agility, and a commitment to using research in practical ways to solve problems. Ryerson’s strengths similarly lie in the comprehensiveness and quality of the long established and successful policy studies graduate programs. Ryerson is also a product of its geography: an urban university in the heart of Toronto, with campuses across the Greater Toronto Area and Ontario, embedded in global networks.

Because of Ryerson University’s research excellence, engagement with the community, history of activism, commitment to enriched student experiences, and diverse stakeholders and networks, Ryerson is ideally situated to have a positive and unique impact on public policy.

Task Force members highlighted that these strengths can be mobilized in bold ways to help the public, communities, stakeholders and governments confront the challenges before us in ways that bring unique Ryerson perspectives to public policy discussions. Members of the Task Force noted that many of these strengths have been previously highlighted in other documents, including the University’s [Academic Plan](#) and [Strategic Research Plan](#) for 2020-2025, which, likewise, see Ryerson as a hub for world-leading researchers to work to solve complex, real-world problems.

Even in areas of strength, like the University's commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity and Reconciliation, Task Force members agreed that more needs to be done. Our approach to scholarly, research and creative (SRC) activities, teaching, and applied public policy must be accompanied by continuing efforts by the University to advance Reconciliation and confront systemic racism and structural inequalities.

Task Force members concluded that the ability of universities to mobilize expertise to help governments and societies confront complex challenges is vital to the University's mission. Mobilizing our research, engagement and dialogue to solve big problems will ensure that Ryerson becomes even more relevant to the communities we serve and to those who fund us, including governments, students and donors.

Based on the work of the Task Force, including extensive scans of internal efforts and initiatives at other universities, focused dialogue, and consultations across the Ryerson community, the Report outlines ten main findings:

1. Successful public policy initiatives increasingly help researchers and students communicate and translate their findings so that societies collectively benefit from research-informed public dialogue and policy-making.
2. Actionable public policy solutions are more likely to emerge when knowledge is mobilized from across disciplines and initiatives are organized around policy challenges.
3. Community engagement complements traditional academic research and produces new forms of knowledge that can be used to improve public policy practice.
4. Deep and lasting partnerships on public policy initiatives with community organizations and the private sector lead to more relevance and deeper understanding of the issues faced by communities and stakeholders.
5. Many successful public policy initiatives build partnerships with governments to work through complex issues and co-create policies and programs that deliver improved outcomes.
6. Enriching the student experience is important for successful public policy programs and can help students engage as citizens on issues that matter to them and prepare them for the labour market.
7. It is important that new public policy initiatives advance diversity, inclusion and equity; build on Ryerson's commitment to Reconciliation; and support anti-racism work.
8. Successful public policy initiatives at other institutions make strategic choices about how to focus limited resources by building on their recognized strengths in ways that capitalize on their existing expertise and brand.

9. Ryerson currently does an excellent job of supporting researchers who engage with public policy and external-facing activities, but there are a number of gaps that could be addressed, including better supporting and rewarding public-facing and applied public policy activities and SRC initiatives.
10. To provide more integrated support to faculties, centres and students interested in engaging in applied public policy activities, it is common for universities to invest in institutional infrastructure, such as schools of public policy and integrated public policy institutes with public-facing mandates that draw faculty from across faculties, departments and disciplines.

The Report outlines how successful public policy schools and institutes devote resources to coordinating and aggregating across different units and initiatives to support external-facing public policy engagement and activities. These activities often include knowledge translation and mobilization, communications, convening, co-creation with external partners, fundraising, executive and professional education, and building partnerships with employers to help students and graduates secure employment.

Based on our findings and deliberations, and to fill existing gaps noted by Task Force members, a process to establish new institutional infrastructure is recommended. The Report recommends continuing to support and deepen linkages between existing initiatives, but also to begin a process that would lead to new structures and institutions. Over the upcoming academic year, the University should embark on the requisite consultation process that could lead to the creation of a School of Public Policy. As a first step, and as a formal consultation process unfolds on the creation of a School, the University could also support an integrated Public Policy Institute with a public-facing mandate that mobilizes researchers from across disciplines, schools and faculties, deepens linkages across existing activities, builds on Ryerson's strengths and responds to the communities we serve.

The Report recommends that new strategic initiatives or institutions should:

- Support, facilitate, amplify and provide visibility to existing work;
- Build on Ryerson's recognized strengths and brand, and align with the values, history and action-oriented approach that have made the University successful; and
- Build partnerships with community organizations to deepen community engagement to improve the lives of those living in the Greater Toronto Area and across Canada.

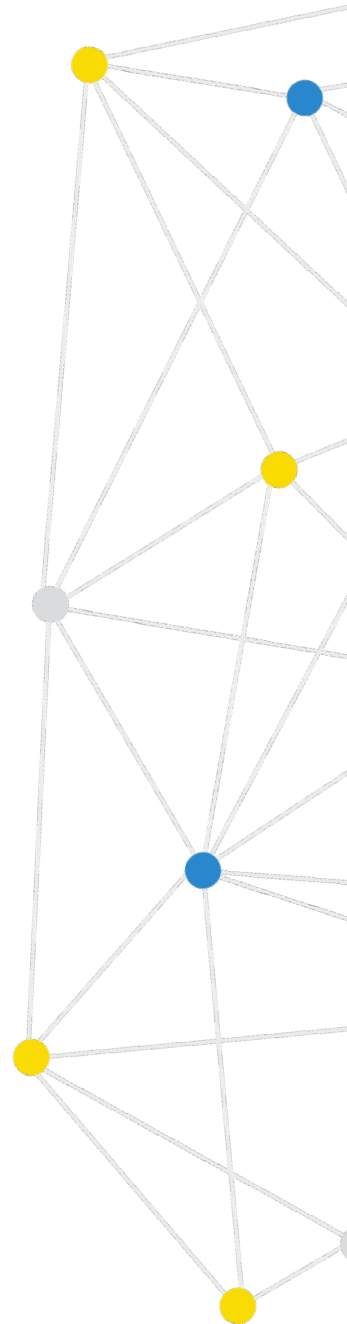
The Report makes additional recommendations, including:

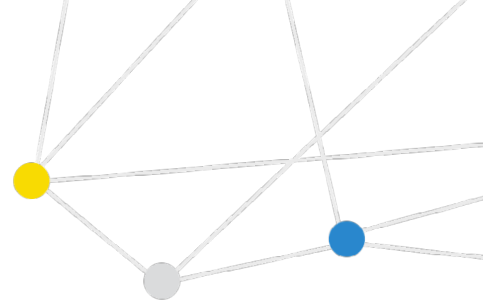
- Invest more resources to support knowledge translation activities that target governments, stakeholders and the public.
- Prioritize interdisciplinary academic programs and initiatives related to public policy.

- Work with governments to co-create solutions to collective challenges faced by the communities we serve.
- Find innovative ways to further enhance the support and training of students and recent graduates interested in engaging on public issues and interested in careers in public policy and advocacy.
- Deepen community engagement work.
- Co-create new initiatives and deepen commitments to Reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism.

The Report notes that schools and institutes are vehicles to augment the visibility, engagement and impact of faculties and departments. They are ways of creating activities, partnerships and academic programs organized around issues and challenges rather than disciplines. They are ways of building public profile, impact and reach. They are ways of attracting funds to confront societal challenges through research and convening. They are ways of building relationships between academic researchers and the broader public policy community. They can have credibility with policy-makers, build ecosystems, institutionalize ongoing relationships, prepare students for the labour market, and undertake tailored professional development. Ryerson has unique expertise to mobilize in all of these areas to support the communities we serve.

We have summarized the main findings in the first sections of this Report. To read the expanded discussion of the main findings and recommendations, please go to: [Appendix C \(Main Findings\)](#) and [Appendix D \(Additional Specific Recommendations\)](#).





Background and Summary of the Process

The Task Force was asked to identify initiatives, models and best practices to enhance the University’s public impact and visibility. More specifically, the Task Force was asked to provide recommendations to the Vice-President, Research and Innovation on how to:

- Consolidate and organize Ryerson’s expertise and add value to the existing work undertaken within Ryerson.
- Amplify and build on Ryerson’s SRC strengths to inform and impact federal, provincial and municipal public policy.
- Scale Ryerson’s public policy capacities.

The Ryerson Public Policy Task Force was designed to include a discovery phase and then a recommendations and priority setting phase. In October 2020, the Task Force began to meet virtually on a monthly basis until April 2021. These meetings were recorded and are publicly accessible. The sessions were designed to understand priorities, evaluate successful models and initiatives, and determine where Ryerson can fill gaps and increase its public policy capacity, visibility, partnerships and impact. Community consultation through a survey during winter 2021 also informed this work. The submission of this Report concludes the work of the Task Force.

Discovery Phase (October 2020 - January 2021)

The [first session of the Discovery Phase](#) in October 2020 was designed for members to gain familiarity with one another, as well as to better understand their roles and the objectives of the Task Force. The next three sessions were organized to have members engage in detailed conversations and learning on three crucial questions to the future of public policy research, education and engagement. These meetings featured presentations by guest speakers, small breakout group sessions and large group discussions. The [second session of the Discovery Phase](#) focused on the question: How can Ryerson University be more effective in policy leadership on key issues? The meeting featured an introduction by Steven N. Liss, Vice-President, Research and Innovation, and Ryerson’s federal and provincial Deputy Minister champions Isabelle Mondou and Martha Greenberg, respectively, as guest speakers. The [third session of the Discovery Phase](#) explored the question: What does future policy leadership at Ryerson University look like? This meeting featured Vass Bednar, Executive Director of McMaster’s Digital Society program, as a guest speaker. The [fourth session of the Discovery Phase](#) concluded the discovery phase with a

discussion on: How can Ryerson University’s approach to public policy be more inclusive? This meeting featured a panel discussion with Professor Hayden King and Senator Ratna Omidvar.

Recommendations and Priority Setting Phase (February 2021 - May 2021)

The second phase focused on how to strengthen and amplify Ryerson’s public policy capacity and impact, including identifying initiatives, models and best practices within Ryerson and at other universities. The [first session of the Priority Setting Phase](#) featured a discussion of [an external scan of Canadian and international public policy institutions](#). A draft survey to be used to consult the wider SRC community and solicit feedback on Ryerson’s public policy work was also shared with members of the Task Force. The [second session of the Priority Setting Stage](#) focused on [an internal scan of public policy research and activity across Ryerson](#) and also presented the results of the [Ryerson Public Policy Task Force Survey](#). Task Force meetings wrapped up in April with a [final session of the Priority Setting Phase](#) that focused on the draft findings and recommendations, as well as how to move forward over the next year to advance the vision and the recommendations outlined in this Report.



Main Findings

Based on our analysis of the internal and external scan, as well as the survey that was distributed to the wider SRC community, we have arrived at ten overarching observations. More detailed description of these findings is found in [Appendix C](#).

1

Knowledge translation and mobilization are becoming more important to the University's mission

Knowledge translation has become more important than ever. Universities are finding more ways to mobilize their expertise to help governments deliver positive impact and help the public understand and find solutions to challenges in their communities. Successful public policy initiatives increasingly help researchers and students communicate and connect their work to public policy discussions so that societies benefit collectively from research-informed public dialogue and policy-making. Successful public policy engagement initiatives at universities focus on accessible content, invest in research communications and create new accessible platforms to disseminate knowledge.

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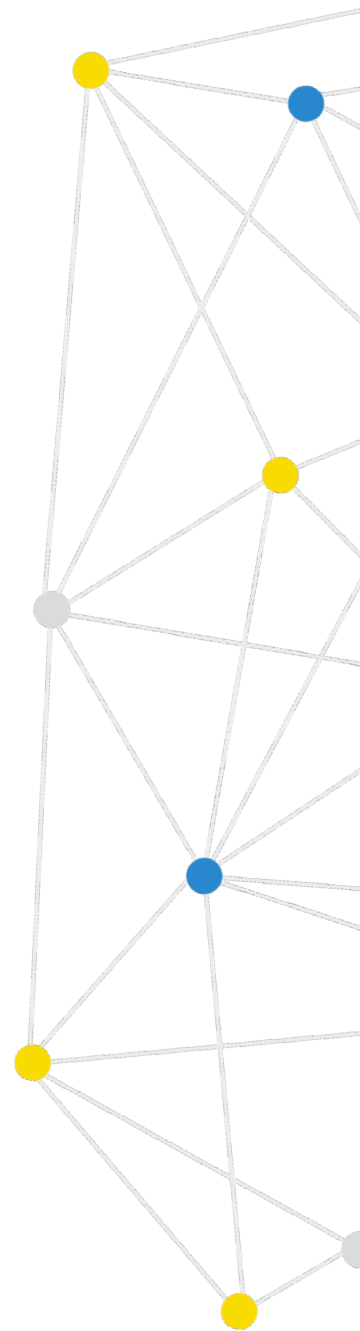
A commitment to interdisciplinary approaches is a feature of many public policy initiatives

Public policy solutions are more likely to emerge based on research that is organized around problems and challenges and integrates and cross-fertilizes knowledge across disciplines. Ryerson has a history of building applied programs that integrate the expertise of different disciplinary approaches. The capacity of Ryerson to synthesize the insights and knowledge of science, engineering, business, design, community service, arts and other disciplines is a key strength of the University. The value of working across disciplines is attractive to students, the community, governments and other stakeholders.

3

Community engagement and action-oriented and applied public policy initiatives create deeper and positive impact within communities

Community engagement leads to more knowledge and impact. Ryerson has built trust over time with diverse stakeholders and members of the community and has a deep commitment to knowledge mobilization, advocacy and serving the broader community. Ryerson has a tradition of respecting different forms of community-based research, understanding that a variety of research methods can lead to better understanding and the co-creation of knowledge with partners. Action-oriented and experiential learning are important to Ryerson's models.



4 Strong partnership models increase policy visibility, relevance and impact

Successful public policy initiatives build on their commitment to community engagement by also establishing formal and informal collaborations. Partnerships with community organizations and the private sector lead to deeper understanding, more relevance and more impact.

5 Co-creation with governments and other public sector organizations can lead to practical solutions that deliver results

Public policy initiatives can also have impact through partnerships with governments and the broader public sector by using research and convening to identify actionable public policy solutions to immediate issues that governments are facing. Ryerson has expertise that can be mobilized to help policy-makers work through complex issues and co-create policies and programs that research evidence suggests would deliver improved outcomes.

6 Purposeful and deep engagement with students needs to be integrated into initiatives

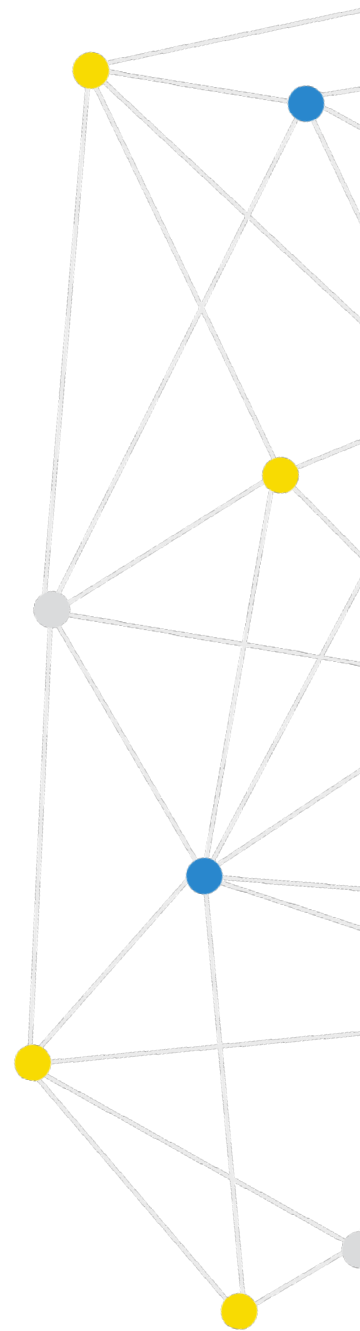
The needs of students and their integration into research and engagement projects is a hallmark of successful public policy programs. Ryerson has a deep commitment to enriching the student experience and preparing students for jobs and active engagement in public life, and has done so with success.

7 Research-driven public policy solutions should advance the University's commitment to Reconciliation, equity, diversity and inclusion

The University has made a serious commitment to Reconciliation and to advancing diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism work. New public policy initiatives at Ryerson should reflect and advance these commitments.

8 Public policy impact is enhanced by building on strengths

The most successful public policy programs make strategic choices about where to invest limited resources. They build on their strengths and are conscious of the communities in which they reside and the stakeholders they serve. Additional efforts to amplify Ryerson's public policy engagement and impact must begin by a fair and good faith assessment of our existing capacities, strengths, networks, history and resources.



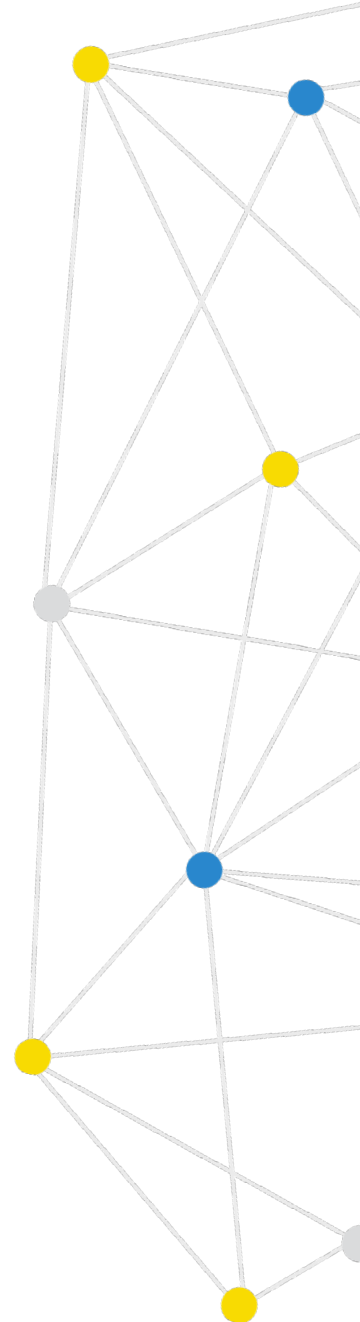
9 Additional institutional supports and infrastructure are needed to address gaps and take advantage of opportunities

Despite Ryerson's success, and the success of many individuals, initiatives, centres, institutes and departments, Task Force members consistently highlighted a number of gaps that could be filled if the University wants to more fully take advantage of opportunities to impact public policy. Recurring issues include support for knowledge translation and mobilization, communication of research findings in policy-relevant ways, convening across departments and sectors, executive education programs with a public policy focus, and providing more visibility to policy-relevant SRC initiatives.

10 Schools of Public Policy or integrated public policy institutes are often created to improve the institutional capacity to drive impact and visibility on public policy and scale policy-relevant activities

To address these gaps, it is common for universities to create schools of public policy, public policy think tanks, or institutes with public-facing mandates. These tend to draw faculty from different faculties, departments and disciplines. Successful public policy programs devote resources to coordinating and aggregating across different units and initiatives to reduce the administrative and transaction costs of public policy engagement. These initiatives include focused activities such as knowledge translation and mobilization, communications, convening, co-creation with external partners, fundraising, executive and professional education, and building partnerships with employers to help with student and graduate placement. Rather than launch schools of public policy, some institutions fund broad public policy institutes to consolidate and strengthen various external-facing initiatives.

We note that these conclusions are mutually reinforcing and, when successfully integrated and implemented, represent a coherent vision of an approach to enhancing public policy relevance, visibility and impact for the University.



Recommendations

The following recommendations are informed by the main findings of the Task Force. We recognize that many of these recommendations have resource implications, require formal approval processes, or both. More detailed recommendations can be found in [Appendix D](#).

These recommendations are offered with a strong belief that Ryerson has a significant opportunity to fill gaps in the applied public policy arena and can do so in innovative ways that support the next steps in Ryerson's evolution.

Overarching Strategic Recommendations

The Task Force consistently heard about the tremendous work currently being conducted on public policy and work that is relevant to public policy conducted by faculty, institutes and research centres. Ryerson is an entrepreneurial and welcoming incubator for many great policy innovators. We believe it is important that any initiatives that are pursued do not diminish established strengths. Instead, new initiatives should support, facilitate, amplify and provide visibility to existing work.

We consistently heard about the important history and values of the University. We therefore recommend that any new initiatives build on these and are organically aligned with the ethos and approach that has made Ryerson successful. In particular, new initiatives should be multidisciplinary, privilege students, support advocacy and activism, build diverse and meaningful partnerships, and help in a practical way to solve real problems faced by the communities in which Ryerson resides. As Ryerson considers how to increase its public policy impact and visibility, we recommend that it should build on recognized strengths and brand differentiation, both in terms of approach (e.g., community-informed, applied, experiential, action-oriented, cross-disciplinary, etc.) and focus.

Task Force members highlighted the successes – and sometimes obstacles – to building partnerships for community-based research and community impact. We therefore recommend that new public policy initiatives pursued by the University have as one of their goals the partnering with local organizations to improve the lives of those living in the Greater Toronto Area and across Canada.

Ryerson has a significant opportunity to fill gaps in the applied public policy arena and can do so in innovative ways that support the next steps in Ryerson's evolution.

New initiatives should support, facilitate, amplify and provide visibility to existing work.



We consistently heard about the important history and values of the University. We therefore recommend that any new initiatives build on these and are organically aligned with the ethos and approach that has made Ryerson successful.

Task Force members highlighted a number of areas where more resources could bolster public policy impact and highlighted concerns that funding for initiatives and projects can be inconsistent or unreliable. We therefore recommend investing in more permanent structures and institutions that can advance Ryerson's interests and reputation in the public policy space over the long term and are more likely to withstand changes in leadership or cyclical preferences. At peer institutions, the usual approach is to build out the institutional infrastructure for public policy engagement through the creation of schools of public policy, which provide a nexus for convening, partnership building, fundraising, knowledge translation, communications, student placement and training. It is common that the process leading up to the creation of a new School unlocks creative energy and mobilizes diverse stakeholders within the University toward a common purpose and a shared vision.



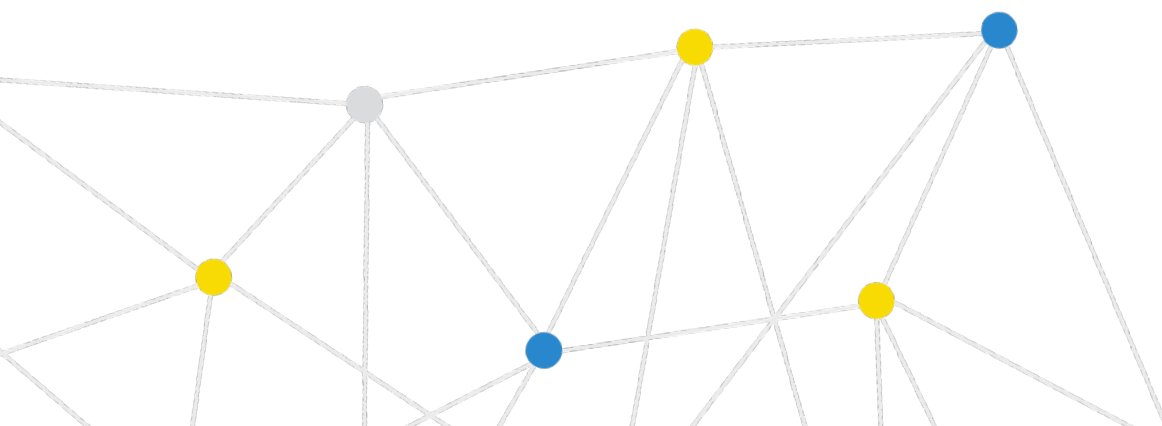
We therefore recommend investing in more permanent structures and institutions.

Task Force members did not devote significant time to considering the ideal institutional infrastructure to improve the University's public policy impact. However, there was wide consensus that a more formal process of engagement should be undertaken to consider the best model. The co-chairs therefore recommend that, over the upcoming academic year, the University embark on the requisite consultation process towards the creation of a School of Public Policy. This process should consider how to establish a new School that reflects Ryerson's values, integrates different disciplinary approaches, and builds on Ryerson's tradition of using research knowledge to improve lives.

There was a wide consensus amongst Task Force members that the University has an immediate opportunity to have even more impact on the societal challenges we collectively confront. Therefore, as a formal consultation process begins, the University should consider how it can further support existing efforts. This could include supporting an integrated Public Policy Institute that could immediately enrich the public policy ecosystem by amplifying existing activities, enhancing linkages between current initiatives, supporting researchers who want to influence public debate and policy decisions, and facilitating collaboration with public sector and community organizations to address public policy challenges.

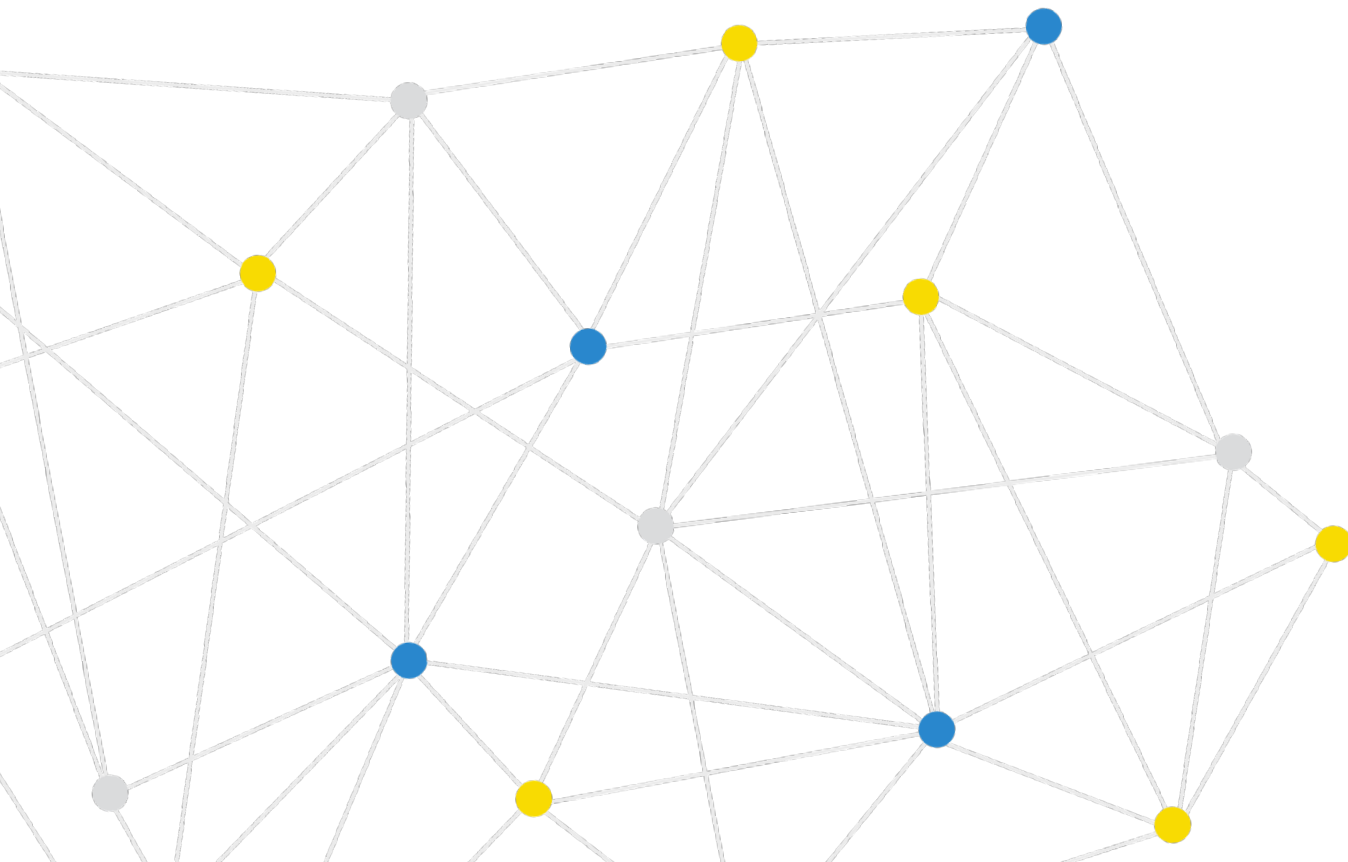
A formal consultation process on the creation of a new School should consider how new institutional infrastructure can successfully take advantage of the opportunities raised in this Report. Some of the key questions to address would include:

- How to better support faculty, students and other stakeholders engaged in public policy work by providing communications, knowledge translation and other supports that amplify existing work.
- How to build more enduring relationships at the institutional level between those engaged in SRC activities, government partners and other public policy stakeholders.
- How to best train and prepare students to be engaged citizens and public policy practitioners, which should include how to integrate students with diverse disciplinary knowledge into public policy work.
- How to enhance the University's capacity to train those working in public policy and government and undertake curriculum innovations in professional development and executive education.
- How to cultivate informed public dialogue that advances democracy and healthy civic discourse.
- How to best co-create solutions with governments, community organizations and other actors and how to help communities address the issues that affect them.
- How to successfully fundraise around pressing societal challenges in ways that deliver benefits across the University.



It is the view of the co-chairs that a new School, true to the University's values and history, would advance our brand as a place where research and practice come together in bold and innovative ways to confront the public policy challenges we face and improve lives locally, nationally and globally. It is also the view of the co-chairs that a consultation process on the creation of a new institution will unlock creative energy, new resources and ideas on the best ways to advance the vision of the Task Force.

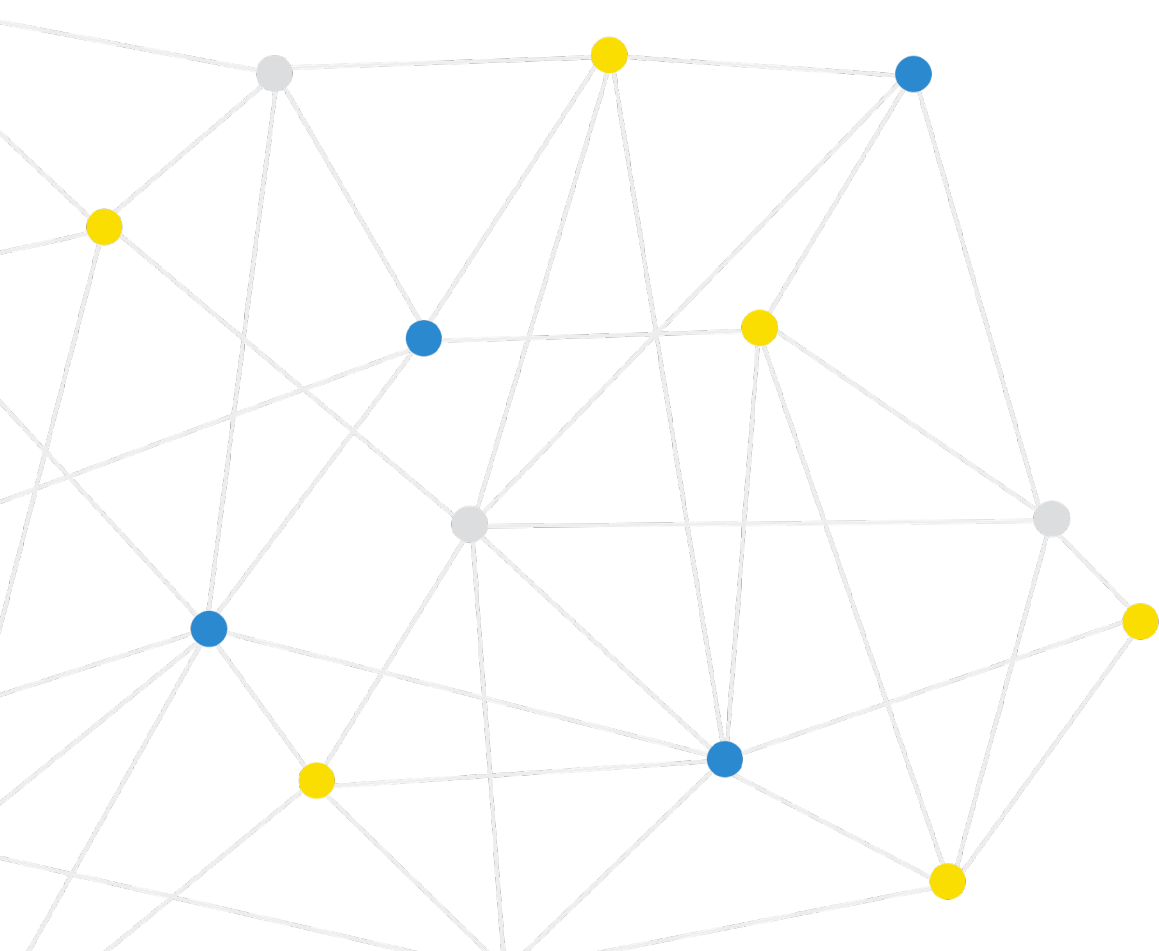
A formal consultation process should take place in 2021-2022. This process should identify how a new School would interact with existing programs, departments and faculties.



Ryerson's Opportunity

Ryerson has an opportunity. The work of faculty and the ecosystem of policy-relevant centres is increasingly respected and recognized for finding actionable, practical solutions to big challenges that Canada faces. With the right institutional support and infrastructure to amplify and scale this work, Ryerson's impact and visibility could be even stronger.

Universities increasingly have an obligation to be at the table to help societies and governments confront the complex challenges that we face collectively. Ryerson researchers currently help the public, governments, public-serving institutions and other organizations understand problems, find solutions and improve lives. As an urban, inclusive, engaged, activist, agile, entrepreneurial, practical, multidisciplinary, diverse institution, attuned to the needs of students and the community, Ryerson can build on what we already have and make a unique contribution to the public policy landscape consistent with the institution's history, geography and values.



Appendix A: Membership and Guests

Co-Chairs:



Naomi Adelson,
Associate Vice-President,
Office of the Vice-President,
Research and Innovation
(OVPRI)



Matthew Mendelsohn,
Visiting Professor and Special
Advisor to the President and
Vice-Chancellor, Special Advisor
to OVPRI

Membership:

Opeyemi Akanbi

Assistant Professor, Professional Communication,
Faculty of Communication and Design

Patrizia Albanese

Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies,
Faculty of Arts

Matthew Baker

Associate Director, Government Relations

Karim Bardeesy

Co-Founder and Executive Director,
Ryerson Leadership Lab

Cherise Burda

Executive Director, City Building Ryerson

Wendy Cukier

Professor, Entrepreneurship and Strategy, Ted
Rogers School of Management, and Founder and
Academic Director, Diversity Institute

Frank D'Onofrio

Public Servant in Residence, Politics and Public
Administration, Faculty of Arts

Rachel DiSaia

Strategic Initiatives and Policy Advisor,
Yeates School of Graduate Studies

Johannes Dyring

Assistant Vice-President, Business Development
and Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Vice-
President, Research and Innovation

Jennifer Grass

Assistant Vice-President, University Relations

Murtaza Haider

Associate Professor, Real Estate Management, Ted
Rogers School of Management, and Director, Urban
Analytics Institute

Christian Hui

CIHR Vanier Scholar and PhD Student,
Policy Studies, Faculty of Arts

Carolyn Johns

Professor, Politics and Public Administration,
Faculty of Arts

Avner Levin

Professor, Law and Business,
Lincoln Alexander School of Law and
Ted Rogers School of Management

Songnian Li

Professor, Civil Engineering,
Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science

Terry McAfee

Director, Strategic Planning, Finance and Administration, Yeates School of Graduate Studies

Catherine Middleton

Professor, Information Technology, Ted Rogers School of Management

Sean Mullin

Executive Director, Brookfield Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Melanie Panitch

Executive Director, Office of Social Innovation

Gabriel Resch

Postdoctoral Researcher, Synaesthetic Media Lab

Erin Roach

Executive Director, Diversity Institute

Sanjay Ruparelia

Jarislowsky Democracy Chair, Faculty of Arts

Samir Sinha

Director of Health Policy Research, National Institute on Ageing

Roxana Suehring

Assistant Professor, Chemistry and Biology, Faculty of Science

Pamela Sugiman

Dean, Faculty of Arts

Anna Triandafyllidou

Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration

Ronald Vogel

Graduate Program Director, Policy Studies, Faculty of Arts

Josephine Pui-Hing Wong

Professor, Nursing, Faculty of Community Services

Guests:**Vass Bednar**

Executive Director, Master of Public Policy in Digital Society, McMaster University

Martha Greenberg

Deputy Minister of Policy and Delivery, Associate Secretary of the Cabinet, Ontario Cabinet Office, and Ontario Public Service Deputy Minister Champion at Ryerson University

Hayden King

Executive Director, Yellowhead Institute, and Advisor to the Dean of Arts, Indigenous Education

Isabelle Mondou

Deputy Minister for the COVID-19 Response (Communications), Privy Council Office and Government of Canada Deputy Minister Champion at Ryerson University

Senator Ratna Omidvar

Independent Senator for Ontario, Senate of Canada

Appendix B: Meeting Themes and Deliverables

Date	Meeting Focus
Discovery Phase	
Meeting #1: Thursday, October 22, 2020	Introductions and Review of Public Policy Task Force
Meeting #2: Thursday, November 12, 2020	How can we be more effective in policy leadership on key issues?
Meeting #3: Thursday, December 10, 2020	What does future policy leadership at Ryerson look like?
Meeting #4: Thursday, January 21, 2021	How can Ryerson’s approach to public policy be more inclusive?
Recommendations and Priority Setting Phase	
Meeting #1: Thursday, February 18, 2021	External Environmental Scan and Survey Design
Meeting #2: Thursday, March 18, 2021	Internal Environmental Scan and Survey Response
Meeting #3: Thursday, April 29, 2021	Draft Report and Recommendations

Appendix C: Main Findings

1 Knowledge translation and mobilization are becoming more important to the University's mission

Sense-making is becoming a more important role for universities. Ryerson is already very good at helping governments and communities understand the world and the public policy environment.

Knowledge translation and mobilization efforts ensure that academic research can be disseminated in formats that are accessible for policy-makers. Presenting research knowledge in ways that are relevant and understandable to decision-makers and the broader community increases the impact of policy-relevant research. Knowledge translation efforts can facilitate deeper partnerships between university researchers and external partners, including governments.

Knowledge translation and mobilization activities are diverse and can include the use of social media, plain language summaries, recurring lecture series, media partnerships, data visualizations, podcasts, forums, workshops, social media, and briefs and reports for specific audiences in mind, such as policy-makers or affected communities. Creating accessible, applied and practical content designed for audiences outside the university increases the public policy impact of academic research.

At Ryerson, many researchers lead the way in making their work accessible to a wider audience through reports, policy briefs, journals, working papers, articles, newsletters, blog posts and resources. Our consultations highlighted urban policy, energy, real estate, city building, water policy, Indigenous policy, digital and data issues, community health, and COVID-19 as some areas of knowledge translation strength. In these and other areas, targeted strategies to secure media attention have been successful.

The work of the Task Force highlighted areas where more work could be undertaken, including the better integration of disciplines beyond the social sciences into policy-relevant knowledge translation efforts, distribution of research findings in formats that can be easily shared on social media, and making research more relevant for traditionally underrepresented groups.

At the Canadian and global public policy institutions that the Task Force examined, we found that knowledge translation products which were updated regularly, or had ongoing and predictable activities, often had significant impact because policy-makers and practitioners looked upon them as more relevant. Timeliness communicates relevance and ongoing authority.

It was also noted by Task Force members that successful efforts at knowledge translation, including making research findings accessible through social media, infographics or policy briefs, are not sufficiently recognized for the purposes of academic advancement, nor are they eligible for grants and funding. Globally, some universities are exploring how to design incentive structures to reward faculty who want to undertake more knowledge translation work but feel inhibited from doing so.

Task Force members acknowledged that individual units and faculty members themselves have to be proactive if they want to impact public policy dialogue. At the same time, a recurring theme in the deliberations of the Task Force was a desire for more University-wide resources to help individual researchers with knowledge translation and research communication efforts. In particular, we frequently heard that those outside the social sciences would like more support and incentives to help highlight the importance of science, engineering and other knowledge areas on many public policy issues.

Examples

Global-is-Asian – Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP)

Global-is-Asian is a digital platform that highlights policy issues in Asia and around the world through different publications. This platform is updated daily and features a variety of different mediums, such as short and digestible articles by its staff and faculty, a global politics podcast, and a section which highlights the key elements and impacts of research, studies and projects by LKYSPP faculty.

Podcasts – Duke University’s Sanford School of Public Policy

Podcasts and digital media platforms are becoming more commonly utilized to reach new audiences. Sanford faculty and students create a high volume of podcast series, such as:

- **Ways & Means:** focuses on the successes and failures of creating successful neighbourhoods, cities, states and countries.
- **Policy 360:** hosted by Sanford’s dean, provides timely conversations on key contemporary issues with researchers, policy-makers and policy disruptors.
- **The Leading Voices in Food:** explores topics like food insecurity, obesity, agriculture, access and equity, food safety, food defence and other food policy issues.

Balsillie Papers – The Balsillie School of International Affairs (BSIA)

The Balsillie Papers have been created with the mandate to “[translate] rigorous, interdisciplinary research, into succinct prescriptions aiming to solve humanity’s most critical problems and improve lives around the world.”

Understanding COVID-19 – Ryerson University

Various centres and institutes at Ryerson have facilitated studies and projects related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has required researchers to conduct and showcase timely research. Examples include:

- **City Building Ryerson’s COVID in Focus 2020:** this is a webinar series that took place in fall 2020 and explored the widespread impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on cities.
- **CERC in Migration’s Interactive Dashboard:** this was created to assist researchers in segmenting the immigrant worker population to assess how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected these groups in comparison to workers born in Canada.

- [Centre for Studies in Food Security's Preparing for Food Security After COVID-19](#): this is a SSHRC-funded collaborative research project that involves scholars from CSFS and the City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy Office.
- [Social Media Lab's COVID-19 Misinformation Portal](#): the lab features various resources to combat COVID-19 misinformation. This has included fact-checking reports, guides and interactive dashboards with the intention to spotlight false claims and provide timely and reliable information to protect Canadians.

Land Back Red Paper Project – Yellowhead Institute – Ryerson University

This year-long project explored how Canada dispossesses Indigenous Peoples from the land and what communities are doing to reclaim it. It culminated in a final report and is supported by its own unique web page which provides multimedia tools, infographics, factsheets and resources.

Young Workers Rights Hub – Faculty of Arts – Ryerson University

This hub is designed to promote students' and young workers' well-being at work by increasing their awareness of their rights on the job and how they can go about exercising these rights. The hub hosts various events and compiles resources to inform students on topics related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the future of work.

Centre for Labour Management Relations (CLMR) – Ryerson University

The CLMR aims to facilitate research, support community and student learning, and foster dialogue in the areas of labour, work and employment relations. Since 2010, the centre has hosted over 100 events. The CLMR also actively highlights its research through media appearances, interviews and publications, such as journal articles and reports.



2

A commitment to interdisciplinary approaches is a feature of many public policy initiatives

Universities are organized around faculties, departments and disciplines which provide education and training to students, build expertise and advance knowledge. They are core to the university's mission and they are the foundation on which other activities rest.

Public policy problems and societal challenges tend to cross traditional disciplinary boundaries. The most successful public policy solutions tend to integrate the expertise and knowledge from multiple disciplines.

Ryerson has a long tradition of fostering collaboration amongst faculty, researchers and students from various backgrounds. Creative, innovative and bold cross-disciplinary work is valued at Ryerson. These activities and initiatives include options such as interdisciplinary degree programs. Establishing a collaborative environment allows for the cross-fertilization of ideas and strengthens SRC relationships across campus while encouraging creative, inclusive and multi-pronged solutions to complex issues that governments and communities face.

The external scan conducted for the Task Force revealed that integrating diverse disciplinary approaches and expertise was a core mission of most university-based public policy schools, institutions and initiatives. Within Ryerson, affiliated centres and think tanks are successful in part because of their integration of diverse disciplinary traditions and orientations, which create new connections and reveal new understandings.

Globally, universities are creating new degree programs, public policy schools, research clusters, lecture series, research centres and publication platforms that are explicitly meant to strengthen inclusive thinking across disciplines. These efforts often highlight the expertise and insights of individual specializations, while situating knowledge in a broader context that is relevant to governments and communities.

Ryerson University demonstrates a continued willingness and commitment to work across disciplinary boundaries and foster collaboration amongst faculty members, departments and faculties. This results in bigger, bolder and more innovative projects that have a greater potential for impact and success. The Task Force members repeatedly emphasized their interest in understanding and knowing the work of colleagues in other departments. Many are actively undertaking work to build partnerships and creative collaborations.

Our conclusion is that the University is a leader in promoting internal connections, networks and multidisciplinary work, and that researchers are looking for even more support and resources to build collaboration from the start of projects and scale collaborative initiatives in ways that have policy relevance for governments and stakeholders.

Examples

The School Research Seminar Series – Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP)

This seminar series provides faculty, PhD students and visiting academics with a weekly opportunity to present their research findings, which contributes to its collaborative and interdisciplinary research environment.

Ideas Lab – Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA)

SIPA established three interdisciplinary hubs for engagement and research. These hubs shape the school’s research and categorize all of its applicable events, courses and publications. The different focuses include technology and policy, entrepreneurship and policy, and central banking and financial policy.

Duke Research Week – Duke University’s Sanford School of Public Policy

Provides an online platform that allows Sanford faculty and students’ novel research accomplishments to be highlighted through a series of panel discussions and online webinars to other faculties and disciplines in a collaborative and multidisciplinary environment.

MacEachen Institute for Public Policy and Governance – Dalhousie University

This institute is an interdisciplinary and nationally focused research hub that is a collaborative effort involving several faculties at Dalhousie; it prioritizes making public policy accessible to the wider community in Atlantic Canada.

PhD in Policy Studies Program – Ryerson University

This interdisciplinary program features the streams of public policy and administration, social policy, and immigration, settlement and diaspora policies. The program also draws more than 60 faculty from across the University.



MASc or PhD in Environmental Applied Science and Management – Ryerson University

The Masters (MASc) and Doctoral (PhD) in Environmental Applied Science and Management each reflect the view that professional success in the field of environmental science and management requires individuals to build on their existing skills and knowledge to develop a broad-based interdisciplinary perspective. Students are supported by more than 100 faculty members and external associates from the full range of environmental disciplines, including science, the social sciences, engineering, business, architecture, planning and public health.

MA in Immigration and Settlement Studies – Ryerson University

This innovative program explores immigration trends, policies and programs in Canada from multidisciplinary perspectives. Catering to research- and professionally oriented students, the program prepares graduates for careers in the community, government and private sectors, as well as further academic pursuits.

Research in Focus – City Building Ryerson – Ryerson University

This is an ongoing webinar series intended to highlight topical Ryerson research and thought leadership on fundamental city building concepts in relation to various disciplines. This series features academics and students across different faculties and departments at Ryerson.

Ryerson Urban Water – Ryerson University

Brings together researchers, NGOs, consultants, engineers, architects, utilities, planners and students from across disciplines and professional practices with the intention of creating dialogue and points of intersection. RUW fosters a range of collaborations, such as hacking solutions for the mining industry, implementing green infrastructure and workshopping distributed wastewater treatment technologies while using the University as a living lab.



3**Community engagement and action-oriented and applied public policy initiatives create deeper and positive impact within communities**

Conducting community-based research and practice, and creating opportunities for local communities to learn, teach, inform work, share experiences and be involved in projects is an important feature of successful public policy initiatives at Ryerson.

During the consultative process, the Task Force heard that Ryerson has a strong history and reputation of community engagement, advocacy, activism, knowledge mobilization and city building. These characteristics open up possibilities to engage both students and faculty outside of traditional academic research in a variety of research initiatives, public events, mobilization work and co-creation projects. We also heard that applied public policy projects need to be relevant for the communities we serve, including Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians and other racialized communities.

Ryerson has successfully engaged in the community and has embraced applied, community-based and action-oriented research. One excellent example of this kind of work is the [Masters in Public Policy and Administration Truth and Reconciliation Commission Review, Recommendations and Implementation Report](#) which has been shared nationally. The Task Force heard that we need to steward this work and reputation and build on it. Applied and action-oriented public policy engagement needs to be relevant to the communities we serve.

Successful public policy initiatives at other universities find creative ways to engage community partners by working with NGOs, civil society organizations, non-profits and local governments. Compared to other institutions, Ryerson performs well in partnering with community organizations to mobilize knowledge to have a positive impact and make change. Some of our Ryerson peers also demonstrate a strong capacity to integrate community-based work into student programs and course requirements, such as client-based, consulting capstone projects which require students to work with local organizations to generate innovative solutions to policy problems. These kinds of partnerships are often supported through policy incubators or labs.

Task Force members discussed ways that Ryerson could better institutionalize community-based participation within the University. During our deliberations, we learned about successful initiatives to include community knowledge into teaching, research and practice, as well as the administrative obstacles to doing so, including difficulty in appropriately compensating community partners who offer their time to participate in SRC work. Survey respondents identified more opportunities for partnering with community-based organizations that already have strong and complementary networks and existing platforms. Overall, we heard that institutionalizing partnerships on public policy initiatives and research produced more lasting and meaningful impact than occasional projects.

Examples

Policy Spotlights – Simon Fraser University’s School of Public Policy

This seminar series is held at least eight times during the academic year. It features presentations by community leaders and executives on key policy issues from local, national and international perspectives. There is also a Q&A segment that encourages engaging discussions.

Programs – University of Calgary’s School of Public Policy (SPP)

The SPP features several programs that have facilitated community engagement. The Urban Policy Program is one that conducts various research projects aiming to generate progress for Calgary and its citizens. The Social Policy Program is another one that partners with 11 social agencies, including the Calgary Homeless Foundation and Calgary Police Services.

JSGS Policy Shop – Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS)

This is a student-led research and policy organization. Local organizations submit project proposals from which students select. Once approved, the students then form a research group to provide free, high-quality consultancy and research for the local organizations’ projects.

Future Majority – Ryerson Leadership Lab – Ryerson University

This is a national, non-partisan, non-profit organization that aims to leverage the large voting group that youth are a part of and seeks to facilitate community engagement while mobilizing young Canadians through relational organizing and face-to-face interactions. This project aims to amplify and advocate for the concerns and priorities of youth.



Coalition for Alternatives to Streaming in Education – Ryerson Leadership Lab – Ryerson University

This coalition is made up of a diverse group of individuals, organizations and community groups seeking to end the practice of academic streaming within Ontario schools. This coalition has worked collectively with students, parents and communities to conduct and mobilize research, raise public awareness and support advocacy.

Green Infrastructure Projects – Ryerson Urban Water (RUW) – Ryerson University

RUW has facilitated a series of projects providing education on green infrastructure within both the City of Toronto and the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area. Several of these projects have helped address the concerns and issues faced by many communities.



4 Strong partnership models increase policy visibility, relevance and impact

Public policy challenges are best confronted through partnerships and collaboration. Formulating strategic partnerships with various entities both across and external to the University is vital to strengthening Ryerson's SRC public policy impact. This includes partnerships within the University to encourage collaboration among faculty members, students, researchers, affiliated centres and alumni. Conversations between Task Force members highlighted the importance of informal and formal partnerships.

Task Force members discussed the value that external partnerships bring to Ryerson, highlighting partnerships with other universities, civil society organizations, the private sector and other policy-relevant research centres. Formalizing these partnerships in some cases is important to ensure that these collaborations are not overly dependent on individual relationships which can then weaken due to staff and leadership turnover. The external and internal scans revealed that formal partnerships can be used to deliver ongoing events, publications, creative research initiatives, opportunities for students, curriculum development, and executive education and professional development programs.

Task Force members and survey respondents highlighted rich and diverse existing partnerships with the private sector and community organizations across the University. To complement these strong collaborations, Task Force members made several suggestions, including using alumni to help build external partnerships, employing designated staff to support partnership building, and creating a public policy institute with a mandate to build partnerships with governments, media and others.

Task Force members also highlighted the strength of Ryerson's international networks and explored how to build even more international partnerships, with opportunities to deepen international engagement and leadership to increase visibility and impact in ways consistent with the University's academic and research plans.

Examples

Global Public Policy Network (GPPN)

This network strategically links top graduate policy institutions from around the world and creates a platform for partnership, research collaboration and student exchange. Members include: the São Paulo School of Business Administration (Brazil), the London School of Economics and Political Science (U.K.), the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Public Policy (Japan), the Hertie School (Germany), Paris Institute of Political Studies (France), the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (Singapore) and Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (U.S.).

CityLAB Hamilton

This is an innovation hub that joins academics, students and city staff together to collaborate and improve the City of Hamilton for all. Complex issues related to the themes of healthy neighbourhoods, climate change and municipal excellence are identified and matched with faculty and courses from Hamilton's three post-secondary institutions. Students and staff then design an innovative real-world project to address the issue.

Partnerships – Office of Social Innovation (OSI)

The OSI has generated partnerships with entities at Ryerson itself and organizations external to it. These collaborations have helped OSI deliver study programs and facilitate various projects and initiatives. Examples of internal partners include the Yeates School of Graduate Studies, the Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science and the DMZ. External partners include OCAD University, the University of Oxford, the City of Toronto, RBC and the Arab-American Family Support Centre.

Partnerships – Centre for Labour Management Relations (CLMR)

The CLMR has generated partnerships with over 170 organizations, including academic institutions, government agencies, labour unions, private sector firms, research centres and community groups. Examples of previous partners include USW Canada, AMAPCEO and the Broadbent Institute. The CLMR has also secured funding from various organizations within the public, private and non-profit sectors.



5**Co-creation with governments and other public sector organizations can lead to practical solutions that deliver results**

Task Force members discussed how governments and broader public sector and public-serving organizations, when faced with addressing policy challenges, are often receptive to the advice, expertise and evidence provided by Ryerson researchers. There is interest and receptor capacity within governments to learn from researchers.

Task Force members discussed the importance of deep, diverse, and multidimensional formal and informal partnerships with governments at all levels to increase Ryerson's public policy impact and visibility. More direct links with governments make it easier for individual faculty members and centres to distribute timely and relevant research findings and advocate. Here we note in particular the University's strong association with the federal and provincial Deputy Minister champions and the invaluable contributions of the University's Public Servant in Residence program to faculty and students. The research conducted by the Task Force highlighted how peers of the University partner to facilitate knowledge sharing with government agencies, facilitate executive education and professional development programming, provide consistent policy-relevant student opportunities, serve in an advisory capacity for the government, and conduct research on behalf of governments.

Our external scan highlighted how many leading public policy schools and initiatives serve as important sites for convening and co-creation. Shared scoping of challenges and mutual problem-solving approaches between public sector organizations and researchers can help inject new insights into policy discussions and help governments find innovative solutions and bold approaches that had not been previously visible.

Governments and other public, private and community sector organizations are often interested in working with Ryerson researchers to solve problems. These projects and initiatives continue to demonstrate the relevance and importance of university-based research to government and private funders.

Examples

Partnerships – Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG)

MBRSG works very closely with the Government of Dubai on curriculum development and aligns its strategic priorities to reflect the priorities of both the Dubai and U.A.E. governments. MBRSG also has an established Policy Council that joins a diverse range of stakeholders together, including local and federal governments, experts, and representatives from civil society organizations.

Executive Education – Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)

ANZSOG has a well-defined focus to deliver continuing education in public policy and public administration training specifically to senior managers and public sector leaders. Their educational and research programming is designed to meet the needs of public sector leaders and this has allowed the institution to develop an extensive network of alumni serving in jurisdictions across Australia, New Zealand and the world.

First Policy Response (FPR) – Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship and the Ryerson Leadership Lab – Ryerson University

FPR is a convening and publishing project that identifies social and economic policy ideas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. FPR also hosts regular virtual town halls that join together policy-makers, researchers, frontline workers and community members. This project focuses on knowledge translation and mobilization, highlights interdisciplinary proposals, and aims to co-create actionable policy and program ideas.



6**Purposeful and deep engagement with students needs to be integrated into initiatives**

Ongoing enhancement of the student experience is one of Ryerson's core objectives. Student involvement in SRC activities is vital to training and developing new researchers and policy leaders. The Task Force is satisfied that Ryerson already does this well and members explored how this record of success can be scaled and deepened. By increasing opportunities for students to participate in policy-relevant SRC activities, the University may also attract, develop and retain more high-quality undergraduate and graduate students engaged in public policy.

In our external scan of public policy initiatives, student involvement in research and outputs was identified as a key success factor, either through student-led publications, student-organized events, or active engagement in ongoing research projects within the institutions' research centres, policy labs and associated think tanks. These institutions also provide opportunities for students to engage with peers and faculty, network, and build social and professional capital.

It was also noted that learning is not a one-way street. Faculty and researchers can benefit deeply from the insights and experiences that students bring to projects, enriching understanding and integrating community-based knowledge. Students, both graduate and undergraduate, can anticipate emerging policy issues and help researchers and policy-makers in the foresight work that is needed for future policy trends.

Action-oriented and experiential learning are increasingly integrated into successful public policy programs. Some institutions partner students with local community-based groups or NGOs to develop recommendations and solutions to address policy-related problems. Successful policy incubators and labs, at Ryerson and elsewhere, foster interdisciplinary student involvement and collaboration on various public policy issues and involve students in research projects and knowledge translation and mobilization. Our scan of initiatives within Ryerson highlighted the many opportunities for student engagement, including co-op placements, research assistant positions, advocacy projects, and various knowledge-sharing and professional development events.

The Task Force emphasized the need to continue to build on existing student engagement efforts. Knowledge activation, community engagement and advocacy, extension models of education, mentorship, streamlined processes for faculty to identify students to hire, and systematic efforts to maintain connections with alumni (especially those who go on to work in the public and non-profit sectors) were all discussed.

Examples

Events – Harvard University’s Harvard Kennedy School (HKS)

HKS features a high level of student involvement in events as various student-led conferences are held annually. These events provide students with valuable opportunities for learning and networking. They also focus on several key topics. For example, the Black Policy Conference focuses generally on identifying sustainable solutions to address challenges faced by Black communities.

The Pub – University of British Columbia’s School of Public Policy and Global Affairs (SPPGA)

This SPPGA student-led policy magazine features digital content such as articles and podcasts. Various policy issues such as foreign policy, international development and sustainability are explored.

The Munk One Program – University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs

This is an interdisciplinary seminar program available to first-year undergraduate students. It provides the opportunity to brainstorm real solutions to global problems in a hands-on, interactive learning model. Students present their pitch to a panel of experts at the end of the year.

Beyond the Headlines – University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs

This one-hour, current affairs talk radio show and podcast is researched, produced and hosted by Master of Public Policy (MPP) students. The program provides an in-depth discussion of policy issues with experts from a variety of policy backgrounds and often hosts panel discussions.

Annual Ford+Munk Conference – University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs

This student-led initiative joins students together from the Munk School and the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy for an annual case competition. This event provides students with opportunities to develop presentation and policy analysis skills. Students also receive valuable feedback from a judging panel.

MPPA Co-op Program – Department of Politics and Public Administration – Ryerson University

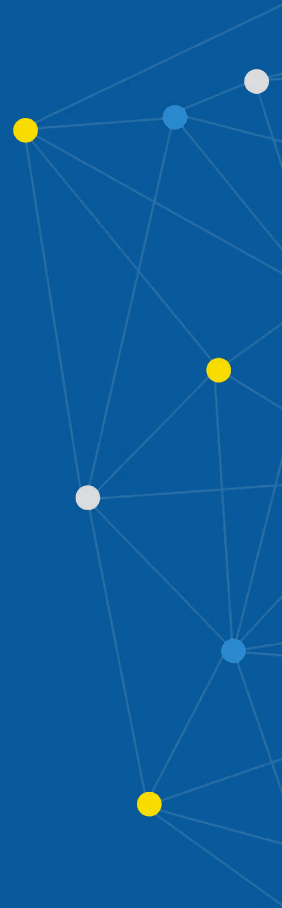
The Master of Public Policy and Administration (MPPA) co-op program has exceptionally high placement rates and provides students with key opportunities to work in a variety of host employer organizations, including the Ontario Public Service (majority of placements), Government of Canada, municipal governments, non-profits, agencies, boards and commissions, associations, and the private sector. Students who participate in the co-op program are overwhelmingly successful, well prepared to demonstrate their strong policy core competencies by virtue of relevant course work and unique experiential learning modules, including the Policy Enrichment Seminar (PES). MPPA students leverage the co-op experiences in securing employment opportunities.

Student Consultancy – Centre for Urban Research and Land Development (CUR) – Ryerson University

CUR has committed to educating and preparing students for research, professional practice and leadership roles. Since 2013, CUR has provided 34 students and graduates from Ryerson's School of Urban and Regional Planning with experiential learning opportunities as they were hired to engage in the centre's research activities.

CanStudyUS – Ryerson Leadership Lab – Ryerson University

This annual fellowship program allows students to expand their skills and networks by learning from young leaders as well as U.S. political, policy and community leaders. Students participate in workshops related to topics such as public policy, civic engagement and technology.



7

Research-driven public policy solutions should advance the University's commitment to Reconciliation, equity, diversity and inclusion

Ongoing and enhanced efforts to advance Reconciliation, support anti-racism work, and incorporate equity, diversity and inclusion into public policy research and engagement will help amplify underrepresented voices and communities and improve public policy dialogue and decision-making. Task Force members emphasized how these efforts are key to Ryerson's mission. Ryerson's SRC work often demonstrates a commitment to develop policy solutions and innovations that advance anti-racism.

A commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion has been built into the foundation of Ryerson's SRC activity and the University more generally. Despite this long-standing commitment, conversations among Task Force members highlighted that more work is needed to ensure that these principles are continuously taken into account and reflected in the public policy work of researchers. Suggestions included focusing on access and representation in relation to the University's hiring practices, admission procedures, internship opportunities, programs, leadership structure and use of language.

The external and internal scans highlighted various SRC activities and many administrative initiatives designed to support Indigenous, Black and racialized communities across a variety of disciplines. Some of these initiatives were specifically designed to support underrepresented and marginalized communities outside the University, both locally and globally.

Task Force members highlighted how Ryerson has an opportunity to build on this engagement and advance social justice issues, citing the impact of Black Lives Matter, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the unequal and racialized impacts of the pandemic. It was suggested that Ryerson is well-positioned to lead in advancing public policy discussions that embed a variety of different approaches to knowledge, research and engagement.

Task Force members identified ways the University could build on its strengths and continue to improve. Some suggestions included institutionalizing support for Indigenous SRC work within the University's SRC commitments, reviewing policies and procedures to identify systemic bias, improving internal incentive structures to increase engagement with potential research partners from marginalized groups, and ensuring equity and Reconciliation considerations are deeply integrated in public policy curriculum across all disciplines. Survey respondents likewise highlighted how Ryerson's SRC activities could focus even more on public policy issues important to racialized or underrepresented communities.

Examples

Stand for Series – Duke University’s Sanford School of Public Policy

Sanford ranks high amongst U.S. schools on social policy research and places an emphasis on social policy, social justice and impacts on racialized communities. This series explores important policy conversations to move forward democracy, justice, equity, community, strategy and human rights. Past topics have included corporate social responsibility, racial justice and equality.

The Social Innovation and Activism Fund for Activism on Anti-Black and Anti-Indigenous Racism (SIAF-AABAIR) – Office of Social Innovation (OSI)

This fund allocates \$20,000 of the SIAF fund for student activism and research that focuses on anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism.

The RCIS Digital Series – Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement (RCIS)

This is a six-part digital series hosted from 2020-2021. Its featured speakers included community activists, students, faculty, government officials, researchers, settlement workers and providers, immigrants and refugees. The series was designed to help identify policy changes that would make Canada more responsive and inclusive towards the needs of refugees.

Lincoln Alexander School of Law – Ryerson University

This new law school is focused on equitable access to the justice system and actively seeks to recruit students from underrepresented and underserved populations. The program’s administration and student population are diverse, with 50 per cent of the program’s 170 students coming from a racialized background, 55 per cent identifying as female and 75 per cent representing first-generation law students.



8 Public policy impact is enhanced by building on strengths

Task Force members identified a number of Ryerson's strengths which have been consistently highlighted throughout this Report. These strengths are increasingly understood by governments, other potential public policy partners, students and funders. Investing in these strengths will continue to build Ryerson's unique brand and its national and global impact and leadership.

Task Force members explored how the University can improve its capacity to communicate these strengths and take the next steps in Ryerson's evolution. Discussions focused on strategies to build Ryerson's brand and reputation in ways that increase our impact and the value proposition that the University offers for enhancing public policy partnerships, including with governments. Task Force members believe that continuing to embrace the University's strengths would help SRC activities achieve public policy impact.

The external scan concluded that the most successful public policy institutions make strategic and focused choices about how to build on strengths and communicate their brand. For example, institutions pursued partnerships with local, provincial, national or global institutions based on their areas of expertise, and targeted partners and employers for co-op placements based on their sectoral strengths.

Public policy initiatives and programs are more likely to have a powerful and positive influence in those areas where the University has recognized and scaled its strengths and resources. New academic initiatives at Ryerson, such as the Lincoln Alexander School of Law and the plan to create a new medical school, are being undertaken in ways that build on Ryerson's approach to research, teaching and engagement and serves our communities and stakeholders while complementing Ryerson's brand.

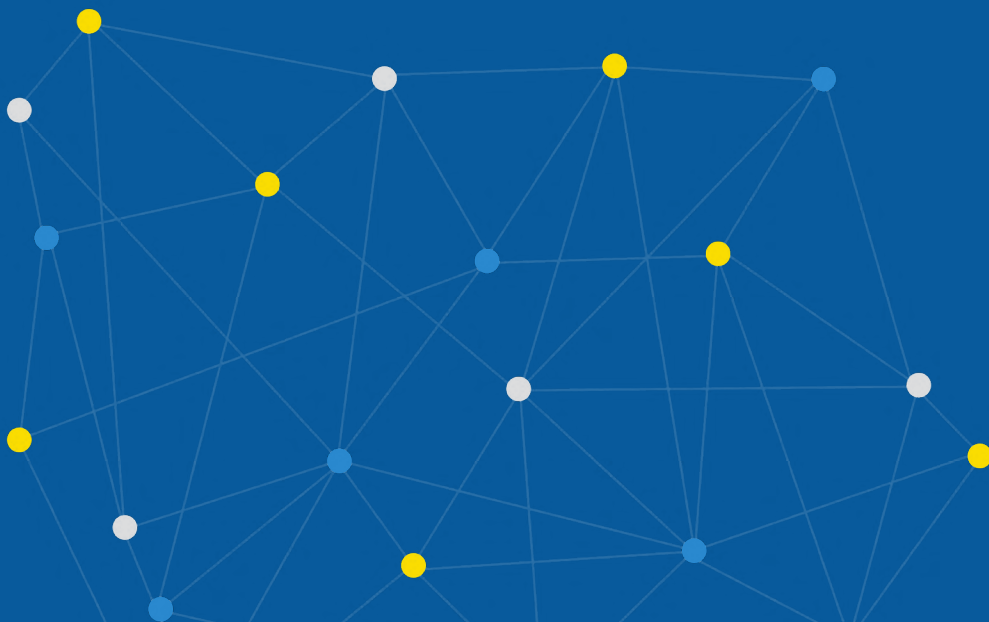
Examples

Clear Objectives

Certain schools clearly define the scope of their research, programs and outreach based on their own strengths and the needs of their communities.

For example:

- [Balsillie School of International Affairs](#) prioritizes global engagement and international relations within their public policy scope.
- [Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy](#) emphasizes connections with the Saskatchewan government and prepares students for a career within the Saskatchewan public service. The school also connects students to local community-based organizations and non-profits.
- [The School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary](#) has a strong emphasis on energy and environmental policy and, as such, maintains strong connections to the energy sector. There is a strategic focus on developing evidence-based policy options in specific research areas as well as engagement and mobilization of key stakeholders and academics involved in the current energy and environmental landscape in Canada.



9**Additional institutional supports and infrastructure are needed to address gaps and take advantage of opportunities**

An ongoing theme of Task Force conversations was a desire for more resources and support for the kinds of public policy activities discussed in this Report. More institutional support for knowledge translation, knowledge mobilization, community engagement, partnership building with governments, and support for other external-facing activities were recurring priorities for the Task Force. Task Force members also highlighted the need for more training on how the public policy process works and when, where, and how researchers can engage to be most effective.

Task Force members frequently discussed how their initiatives often had a significant impact on public understanding and policy-making. They likewise discussed how there were often opportunities for them to have more impact if the University put in place the right institutional, communications and administrative infrastructure to support external-facing activities. In particular, investing in partnership building between academic researchers, research centres and the broader public policy community outside the University was highlighted as an area where more resources and infrastructure could improve impact and visibility.

Examples

Center for Impact Sciences – University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy

This centre focuses on generating evidence in a way that is more actionable for policy-makers. The centre joins experts and policy practitioners together from various fields to deliberate on ways to improve translational research. The centre holds events that aim to join public policy schools from around the world to share findings and coordinate research opportunities.

The Mowat Centre – University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs

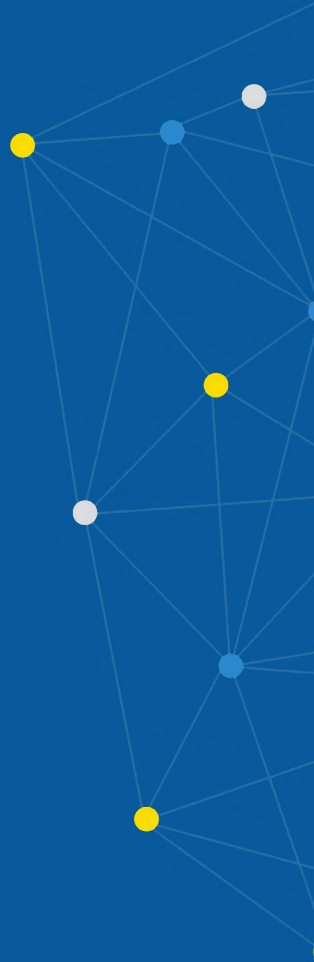
This applied public policy institute operated between 2009-2019 and integrated researchers from multiple disciplines with an explicit goal to influence public narratives and policy decisions. It undertook this work by co-creating research and undertaking knowledge translation using insights from researchers, community stakeholders and policy-makers.

The Duke Initiative for Science and Society – Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy

This initiative fosters research, education, communication, democratic deliberation and policy engagement on the ethical progress of science and technology in society. It provides educational programs, workshop series, a high volume of research and a variety of publicly accessible webinars.

Office of Sponsored Programs and Research – City University of New York's (CUNY) Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy (SPH)

This office is a research support entity that helps the SPH secure funding by identifying and targeting opportunities for sponsored projects. It also helps generate project ideas and prepare grant applications for researchers.



10

Schools of public policy or integrated public policy institutes are often created to improve the institutional infrastructure to drive impact and visibility on public policy and scale policy-relevant activities

It was recognized that many universities choose to create schools of public policy as the key nexus to create linkages, unlock additional resources, build new partnerships, enhance visibility, establish collaborations between academics and practitioners, and ultimately, increase impact of public policy-relevant research and activities. The creation of a school of public policy has been a typical response to build out institutional infrastructure to fill gaps and help researchers, departments and centres.

The external scan highlighted that many of the most successful public policy initiatives take place at schools of public policy, which have mandates to bring together faculty, practitioners and students from diverse disciplines to amplify ongoing work and engage in knowledge translation, public events and dialogues, executive education and professional development, and public policy communications. Leading schools of public policy also have a good track record of designing work-integrated learning programs, transitioning students to relevant employment and developing courses to help graduates translate disciplinary knowledge into public policy employment.

Task Force members also discussed how different kinds of research and program delivery models, such as research institutes, think tanks, or policy and innovation hubs, can be used to complement, amplify and communicate institutional strengths. Think tanks can also be used to undertake knowledge translation and policy labs can be used to incorporate community partners in ways that find solutions to public policy challenges. Task Force members explored how these kinds of integrative units and initiatives can be used to better incorporate knowledge from disciplines that are sometimes excluded from public policy conversations, such as science, engineering, commerce, community services and design.

Task Force members suggested that any new initiatives should complement and enhance existing successful efforts, add value across the University and be additive rather than zero-sum. It was noted that when universities consider the creation of a new entity, such as a new school, significant consultations and work are undertaken to ensure broad inclusivity and that the interests of existing academic and non-academic programs are fully considered.

Examples

Graduate School of Public Policy (GraSPP) – University of Tokyo

GraSPP was co-established in 2004 by the University of Tokyo's Graduate Schools for Law and Politics and Graduate School of Economics. This policy school was designed to train students to anticipate emerging issues and potential countermeasures. It also seeks to transform students into experts who can serve as competent public officials skilled in communication, consensus-building and ethics.

School of Public Policy (SPP) – London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)

The SPP was founded in 2018 after LSE's Interim Director, Professor Julia Black, created a Task Force to review the school's teaching of public policy. The SPP emerged from the recommendations and aimed to better society by delivering high-quality education and training, improving governance and public decision-making, generating original research and supporting its diverse community of students.

Balsillie School of International Affairs (BSIA)

BSIA was created through a joint collaboration between the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University. CIGI uses its internal expertise and worldwide network of practitioners to help inform and guide BSIA's public policy outreach and collaborative research.

The School of Public Policy and Global Affairs (SPPGA) – University of British Columbia (UBC)

The SPPGA is an interdisciplinary research hub that was created through a partnership between UBC's Institute of Asian Research and the Liu Institute for Global Research. This policy school combines high-quality and interdisciplinary teaching, research, innovation, engagement, and partnerships in public policy and global affairs to positively contribute to society by solving complex local and global issues.



Appendix D: Additional Specific Recommendations

The University should invest more resources to support knowledge translation activities that target governments, stakeholders and the public. This could include funding a general Public Policy Institute or a dedicated office focused on supporting best practices in SRC knowledge translation and helping researchers reach a broader audience. Specific activities could include:

- Supporting scientists, engineers and others from disciplines outside the social sciences to engage in more translational activities.
- Supporting the development and use of non-traditional forms of publications and knowledge dissemination such as policy briefs and other products that can be shared in non-traditional formats and that help those outside the University understand and address the issues faced by their communities.
- Providing support to existing knowledge translation activities and publications.
- Encouraging faculties and departments to consider how to effectively include knowledge translation activities in hiring, promotion and tenure considerations.
- Supporting knowledge translation activities consistent with Ryerson's history of advocacy, knowledge activation, social justice and impact in the community.
- Reviewing research ethics processes to ensure they are appropriate for applied policy projects.

The University should continue to prioritize interdisciplinary academic programs and initiatives. This could include:

- Continuing to add new interdisciplinary programs for students.
- Supporting the creation of a new general Public Policy Institute to support and profile faculty and affiliated centres working on public policy issues.
- Supporting the creation of a new School of Public Policy to provide more support toward integrating different research and disciplinary traditions into public policy offerings, particularly at the graduate level.

The University should invest additional resources to support partnership building with governments and community organizations. A new Public Policy Institute or School of Public Policy could be mandated to deepen this work. Activities could include:

- Supporting emerging professional development, executive education, badging and micro-credentials initiatives. In particular, programs targeting public servants and policy professionals should be supported with innovative curriculum offerings.
- Collaborating with governments or other stakeholders to work through public policy problems and develop actionable policy and program solutions in policy labs.
- Deepening Ryerson's relationship with city universities around the world with a focus on public policy.
- Using alumni to help improve partnerships.

The University should continue to find innovative ways of supporting and training students and recent graduates interested in engaging on public issues and interested in careers in public policy and advocacy. Efforts could include:

- Supporting the network of public policy activism and a student leadership ecosystem that is currently helping students understand and advocate on policy and build future policy leaders.
- Continuing Ryerson's tradition of expanding work-integrated learning opportunities and co-op programs, including in the Faculty of Arts and other departments where these approaches are less common.
- Encouraging and incenting Ryerson's successful network of institutes, labs and centres to find even more opportunities to include students in their work.
- In partnership with Magnet, providing students interested in careers in public policy and advocacy with targeted job readiness learning opportunities.
- Through existing faculties and initiatives, supporting student-led initiatives such as publications, conferences and podcasts, as well as supporting student-faculty consultancies and community-based problem-solving initiatives.
- Addressing growing labour market needs in areas such as technology and health care by continuing to find innovative ways to train students from different faculties in public policy skills and public policy knowledge.

Faculties, departments and centres, including their administrative offices, should continue to build on their community engagement activities and co-creation activities, which could include:

- Establishing Ryerson as a global centre of expertise in understanding and rewarding community-based research.
- Simplifying administrative procedures to make it easier for community-based organizations to participate in research projects.
- Establishing formal partnerships with community organizations that have existing networks, programs and platforms on which to build.
- Continuing to build opportunities for students to complete community-based projects, including incorporating these into course requirements.
- Institutionalizing more “residency” and “professor of practice” models, whereby community-based practitioners and experts with non-academic backgrounds engage directly with Ryerson faculty and students. Likewise, “scholar-in-residence” programs in partnership with community organizations and the private sector should be used.
- Exploring the viability and business case for a “hub for public deliberation” as a site of community dialogue, and examining options for connecting it to existing infrastructure.
- Supporting policy and ideas labs that help community organizations and governments work through challenges and arrive at innovative, research-informed solutions.
- Supporting existing public dialogue initiatives that are explicitly designed to have academic researchers and community practitioners engage and build shared knowledge.
- Increasing the involvement of community partners and experienced local practitioners within classroom settings. This can help further transfer community-based knowledge into the academy and support experiential learning.

The University should continue to co-create new initiatives and deepen commitments to Reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism in new and existing public policy initiatives. Actions could include:

- Embedding anti-racism, Reconciliation, equity, diversity and inclusion within course and SRC content across all disciplines.
- Ensuring there is targeted funding for scholars and students from underrepresented and marginalized communities.
- Mobilizing Ryerson's capacity to help governments, the private sector, labour market and the community sector develop solutions to systemic racism and its impacts. Ryerson's well-respected network of centres could help identify particular issues that could benefit from co-creation partnerships with researchers, governments and other public organizations.
- Ensuring that SRC initiatives with Indigenous or racialized communities adhere to appropriate standards and practices.

Appendix E: Key Documents and Materials

Background Materials

[Full Member Biographies](#)

Discovery Phase

[Meeting #1: Minutes \(October 2020\)](#)

[Meeting #2: Minutes \(November 2020\)](#)

[Meeting #3: Minutes \(December 2020\)](#)

[Meeting #4: Minutes \(January 2021\)](#)

[Discovery Phase Session Summaries](#)

Recommendations and Priority Setting Phase

[Meeting #1: Minutes \(February 2021\)](#)

[Meeting #2: Minutes \(March 2021\)](#)

[Meeting #3: Minutes \(April 2021\)](#)

[External Environmental Scan](#)

[Internal Environmental Scan](#)

[Survey Results](#)

