

News

DiVERSITY INSTITUTE

The 50 – 30 Challenge

Your Diversity Advantage



The 50-30 Challenge: Your Diversity Advantage

Dear Colleagues,

Ryerson's Diversity Institute applauds the federal government's recent announcement of [The 50 – 30 Challenge: Your Diversity Advantage](#). This initiative will bring together the federal government with corporate partners, community organizations, equity seeking groups, and expert researchers to advance gender equity and diversity in leadership across Canada by helping to accelerate diversity strategies already underway and assisting other organizations in improving practices. Building on our twenty years of work to advance diversity and inclusion broadly and specifically through our [DiversityLeads](#) initiative, using evidence and

best practices, we are excited to be one of the early adopters of this initiative and encourage your organization to be as well.

The challenge is rooted in two aspirations over time – Gender Parity ("50%") and Significant Representation ("30%") of other under-represented groups (racialized persons, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ2 community) on Canadian Board(s) and senior management. The challenge will use differentiated approaches to measure progress and targets recognizing the unique needs of various sectors, organization types and sizes as well as offering a range of supports for the specific needs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Regardless of where you are on your diversity and inclusion journey, you can signal your commitment to moving forward by joining the challenge. While it is not a magic solution, organizations have shown that harnessing diversity and inclusion has enabled them to attract the best and the brightest, develop new products and services, access new markets, drive innovation, support engagement and performance and mitigate risk. By encouraging organizations to examine their practices, and explore innovative approaches to advancing diversity and inclusion, the Challenge is well-aligned with the Diversity Institute's ongoing work and we are committed to providing support.

COVID 19's devastating impacts have been uneven and exposed and exacerbated inequality in Canada. In spite of the havoc it has wrought, we have seen with the pandemic that things people thought impossible are possible. We encourage you to accept, the 50-30 Challenge and work together to "Rebuild Better".

[Sign onto the challenge!](#)

The Diversity Institute has a number of programs that will help advance the Challenge:

Based in the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University, we work with more than 250 organizations to better understand the "business case" for diversity and inclusion. We also have done a deep dive into the challenges to moving forward – from deeply rooted stereotypes, to organizational policies and practices, individual attitudes and behaviours – as well as "what works" harnessing our understanding of innovation and complex systems change.

Since 2008 through our Diversity Leads project we have been collecting data on representation on boards and in leadership in large organizations across the sectors in Canada. This research informed the development of C-25, Canada's new comply or explain legislation. While we are making (slow) progress on advancing women on boards (now 25%), racialized people are dramatically under-represented (4.5%) and persons with disabilities, Indigenous people, and LGBTQ2S+ are absent or not self-identifying. In Toronto, where half the population is racialized, white women outnumber racialized women on boards by a ratio of 12:1. Across 1,639 corporate board members in Canada, we found 13 who are Black.

[DiversityLeads 2020](#)

Our proprietary tool kit – the Diversity Assessment Tool (DAT) which has been applied across sectors – Financial Services, Information Technology, Health Care, Cultural Industries, Government, Policing, Media and Communications and Small Medium Enterprises – as well as through the innovation ecosystem – research and funding agencies, incubators and accelerators and business support organizations – to benchmark and guide the development of strategies to advance diversity and inclusion.

Our database of best practices supports more inclusive governance, benchmarking, human resources, culture, outreach or to bring a gender and diversity lens to the entire value chain (procurement, research and development, operations, product and program delivery, marketing, services and support).

Our database of more than 4000 women and diverse leaders – on boards and in the C-suite of Canada's largest corporations, non profits, agencies, boards and commissions, hospitals and universities – as well as partnerships with other organizations not only provides an answer to “we cannot find any” but also a treasure trove that informs our “See it. Be it” campaign to challenge stereotypes

Our standard and customized training and capacity building programs can support organizations large and small advance their goals

We have a team of well-trained diverse young people ready to roll up their sleeves and help,

particularly those small organizations which need hands-on support leveraging Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programs.

If you or your organization would be interested in learning more about this initiative or would like to have a conversation with us about working with the Diversity Institute to improve or examine your organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, please let us know.

Best regards,

Diversity Institute