

News Release

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Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, appointed Executive Director of the Ryerson University Institute for Privacy and Big Data

Toronto, ON (March 19, 2014) – Ryerson University today announced the appointment of Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, as the Executive Director of the new Ryerson University Institute for Privacy and Big Data. Currently a distinguished visiting professor at Ryerson, Dr. Cavoukian's appointment will take effect at the conclusion of her unprecedented third term as Commissioner, on July 1, 2014.

"It has been an honour to serve as the Information and Privacy Commissioner for the past three terms, spanning over 15 years. Together with my hardworking and devoted staff, we have built a world-class agency, renowned for our innovation and leadership in access and privacy. We are grateful for the support of the many Ontarians who have shared with us their appreciation for the work we do and the impact we have had," says Dr. Cavoukian. "Having advised the Legislature that I would not be considering a fourth term as Commissioner (three is more than enough!), I am delighted to be able to pursue my passion for preserving privacy, well into the future, with such a progressive university as Ryerson."

Big Data – the acquisition, storage, processing, analysis and use of large data sets - has the potential to enable innovations and facilitate critical social interests with impacts felt at every level, from invaluable discoveries in health research, to mapping of human behaviour in the digital world, to management of natural resources. Ryerson's cross university Big Data Initiative (BDI) focuses on developing new tools and applying those tools to advance organizational performance across sectors. BDI brings together existing centres that collaborate with industry partners to drive the development of new Big Data based products and services, including Ryerson's Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity, Ryerson's Centre for Cloud and Context Aware Computing, and the Data Science Laboratory. The new Institute for Privacy and Big Data will help ensure privacy is considered at every stage of the process.

"The Institute for Privacy and Big Data will bring together experts from both within the university and beyond, to develop new ways to protect and promote people's privacy in the digital age," says Mohamed Lachemi, provost and vice president academic. "I would like to welcome world renowned privacy expert Dr. Cavoukian to Ryerson to lead this new initiative. I know her knowledge and expertise will have immediate impact and be of immeasurable benefit to our students."

The new Institute for Privacy and Big Data, housed within Ryerson's Faculty of Science is an important component of the university's strategy, demonstrating how to harness the power of Big Data in ways that fully respects privacy. The Institute's main objectives include:

- Promote the development of technologies that analyze data within an appropriate context and privacy-protective sphere, and applying those technologies in a positive-sum manner to the various sectors of Big Data in order to improve upon the value and utility of the associated analytics, all while strongly protecting the privacy of data-subjects.
- Provide an educational platform to disseminate the techniques and procedures of privacy enhanced Big Data analytics through research programs.
- Provide an incubation platform for start-up companies to utilize these technologies for new markets and applications, uniquely positioning them as *Privacy by Design* applications, delivering both privacy and Big Data analytics.

Ryerson's existing Privacy and Cyber Crime Institute (currently within the Ted Rogers School of Management) and the research conducted within it, including areas such as workplace privacy, data breaches, identity theft and online privacy, will become part of the new Institute under Dr. Cavoukian's leadership. The new Institute will serve as a hub for Ryerson students, faculty and staff engaged in data-driven training, discovery, innovation and commercialization.

Dr. Cavoukian will take the helm of the new Ryerson Institute for Privacy and Big Data effective July 1, with an official launch to follow in the 2014-15 academic year.

About Dr. Ann Cavoukian

Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, is recognized as one of the leading privacy experts in the world. An avowed believer in the role that technology can play in protecting privacy, her ground-breaking 1995 paper with the Netherlands, on advancing privacy protection through the pursuit of privacy-enhancing technologies (PETs), is now part of the industry lexicon. Dr. Cavoukian is best known as the creator of Privacy by Design, which was unanimously approved as an international standard for privacy protection by the International Assembly of Privacy Commissioners and Data Protection Authorities at their annual conference in 2010 in Jerusalem. Since then, Privacy by Design has grown exponentially, having been operationalized in nine application areas and translated into 35 languages.

About Ryerson University

Ryerson University is Canada's leader in innovative, career-oriented education and a university clearly on the move. With a mission to serve societal need, and a long-standing commitment to engaging its community, Ryerson offers more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programs. Distinctly urban, culturally diverse and inclusive, the university is home to more than 38,000 students, including 2,300 master's and PhD students, nearly 2,700 faculty and staff, and more than 155,000 alumni worldwide. Research at Ryerson is on a trajectory of success and growth: externally funded research has doubled in the past four years. The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education is Canada's leading provider of university-based adult education. For more information, visit www.ryerson.ca

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