

IMPACT REPORT 2022

Many years ago, my daughter was gifted a book called *Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Tales of Extraordinary Women*. We read it at bedtime every night for months. One of the women featured in the book was Grace Hopper (1906-1992), an American computer scientist, mathematician and United States Navy rear admiral. Something she said has stuck with me because it perfectly articulates my belief about innovation: "The most dangerous phrase in the language is 'We've always done it this way.'"

A temporary hiatus of the RTOERO Foundation's grant program during the pandemic provided a rare opportunity to evaluate and optimize. We looked at all aspects of our program and realized that while much of what we did was working, there were other aspects we felt could be improved. We asked ourselves if we could innovate, not through sweeping overhauls, but through modest yet important adjustments.

With each element of the program, we asked, "Why do we do it this way?" After careful consideration, if we discovered a sound strategy and strong logic, we left it alone. But if the only answer we could find was "We've always done it this way," we'd then look for a better way.

The result is a relaunched granting program that among other improvements has simplified the application process, broadened its scope to a wider variety of project proposals and streamlined the work of our peer reviewers.

Innovation is daunting, but it is the only way forward in all areas of life including business, charitable work and education. In my daughter's book, we learned that Grace Hopper was not only a brilliant computer scientist but also a teacher who once said, "The most important thing I've accomplished is training young people...I keep track of them as they get older and I stir 'em up at intervals so they don't forget to take chances."

In this report, you will find updates on some of our ongoing grants, as well as some that have recently been completed, with impressive results. I get incredible satisfaction from knowing that we help bring important ideas to life.

As a donor who has contributed generously to the RTOERO Foundation, you should also share in this feeling of pride and fulfillment. I hope you enjoy reading about the fruits of our collective efforts.



Mike Prentice
Executive Director, RTOERO Foundation



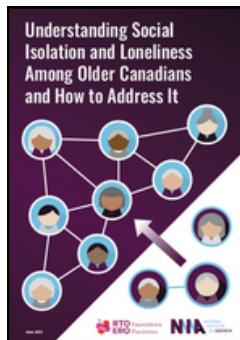
 **RTOERO** Foundation
Fondation

RTOERO Foundation grant updates

For more than 10 years the RTOERO Foundation has been enhancing the lives of seniors in Canada through our donor-funded grant program. Donations help fund the critical research and innovative programming grants that are at the core of our work. The greatest impact of our work lies in these grants, which are instrumental in understanding the complex needs of seniors across Canada. Together, with your generous support, we invest these funds in programs, research and training to support healthy, active aging for all Canadians.

Completed grants

National Institute on Ageing: Understanding Social Isolation and Loneliness Among Older Canadians



This report is a powerful example of the impact our grant program has on the lives of all older Canadians. It synthesizes many important insights and findings, including the fact that older adults are not only at an increasingly high risk of experiencing both social isolation and loneliness but are also especially vulnerable to their negative impacts. The NIA has developed six policy recommendations to help advance a proposed national strategy. The research will lead to the implementation of effective, evidence-based strategies to reduce the impact of social isolation and loneliness, and better support healthy aging. Visit <https://bit.ly/3Pls1uh> to read the full report.

Schlegel-UW Research Institute: RIA Community Conversation Guide



In a community setting, it can be difficult to talk about social isolation as knowing what to say or what to do isn't always obvious. This guide is intended to be a tool to help community members develop a level of comfort in helping others. The guide provides community members with the knowledge to identify signs of potential isolation and the confidence to approach and assist others in need by connecting them to programs and services. Although the initial intent of this guide was to focus on one specific local community, the final guide was revised so that it serves as a resource for all communities across Canada. Visit <https://bit.ly/3j2b963> to read the full guide.

Ongoing grants

Nipissing University: Social Connections and Living with Dementia

The aim of this study is to develop a more nuanced understanding of social isolation and loneliness among people living with dementia and/or their care partners. Preliminary analysis provides insight on how people affected by dementia experience both lost and new connections over time, meanings found through connections with their physical environment and the usefulness of periods of solitude to maintain overall well-being. Outputs will include an exhibition of eco-mapping (visual maps of a family's connections to the external world) to raise awareness of the isolation and loneliness of living with dementia. The project will also produce a resource for dementia care practitioners on the use of eco-mapping as part of an assessment or screening process for social isolation and loneliness.

University of Alberta: Mentally healthy living after social distancing

This project, implemented by a research team from the University of Alberta, aims to identify and compile mentally healthy living strategies used by older adults during the pandemic. Researchers will evaluate which strategies are most effective at reducing anxiety, stress and other mental effects of the pandemic. This will lay the groundwork for a "mental health cookbook" complete with sage advice and accompanying recipes. This project, developed by and for older Canadians, will help isolated individuals feel connected and part of a larger community of recovery. This project, funded solely by the RTOERO Foundation, fits well with our focus on raising public awareness of the mental health effects of social isolation and finding ways to keep older Canadians socially engaged and feeling connected.



SAMPLE PAGES

As we look forward to 2023, we are inspired by the upcoming grants that are currently in the final stages of peer review. The grants we award this year will continue to improve seniors' health and wellness, promote social engagement for older adults and pursue innovative research in the field of geriatrics and gerontology. Your continued support of the RTOERO Foundation makes our work possible – thank you.

The RTOERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine 2022: A YEAR IN REVIEW

Dr. Paula Rochon is the RTOERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine. She is a Senior Scientist at Women's College Hospital in Toronto, and the Founding Director of the Women's Age Lab.

"I want to thank the RTOERO for their ongoing support and collaborations that have been instrumental in the success of this position. The endowed RTOERO Research Chair is advancing care for our aging population – particularly older women – and supports growth, innovation and leadership in geriatric medicine, research, education and training."



PAULA A. ROCHON
MD, MPH, FRCPC

HIGHLIGHTS

- Presented at webinars, including RTOERO Foundation webinars with over 1,200 viewers
- Published 24 articles in peer-reviewed journals (overall over 364 articles) between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022 – 10 as first or senior author, and numerous op-eds
- Awarded funding to support Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities research and implementation
- Provided tools to improve health and wellness with the aim of transforming the aging experience through Women's Age Lab – the first and only of its kind in the world
- Translated knowledge about prescribing cascades research tailored for needs of older women
- Built an interactive learning module to educate on the importance of disaggregating sex and age data in health research

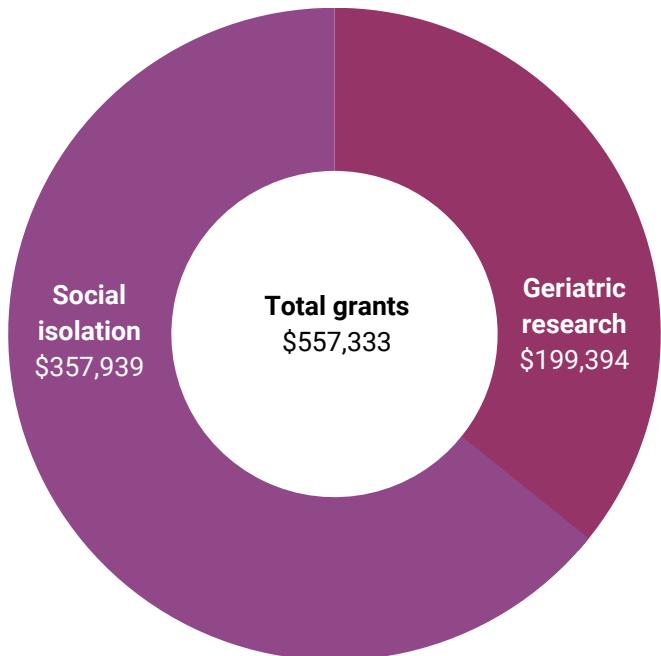
Granting crosses half million dollar mark

Since its inception in 2011, the RTOERO Foundation has focused the bulk of its efforts on raising funds for its annual grant program. We are extremely pleased to announce that the cumulative value of all the grants we have awarded is \$557,333.

In total, we have awarded \$199,394 to projects focused on geriatric and gerontology research. Seven projects have received grants in this area, with an average grant size of \$28,485. The other key area our grants address is the growing problem of loneliness and social isolation among older adults. We have awarded \$357,939 across ten social isolation projects with an average of \$35,794 per project.

The vast majority of funding that supports the RTOERO Foundation's grant program is provided by individual members and RTOERO districts. Without generous contributions from our members, the Foundation could not continue to support the innovative research and community programming that we should all be proud to say we help make possible.

We see the potential and the need for significant growth to our donor base and fundraising capacity to ensure that we fulfill our mission and vision. Through creative and engaging new fundraising channels, we will harness the power of the RTOERO community to significantly increase annual donation revenue and grant impact in 2023.



Districts key to Foundation success

With a new strategic plan that includes bold fundraising and granting targets, we rely more than ever on district support. This list recognizes the generosity of RTOERO districts that have supported the RTOERO Foundation with a financial gift between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022.

\$3,000+

District 13 – Hamilton-Wentworth & Halton
District 24 – Scarborough & East York
District 39 – Peel
District 49 – The Prairies

\$1,000 - \$2,999

District 11 – Waterloo Region
District 14 – Niagara
District 15 – Halton
District 19 – Hastings & Prince Edward
District 20 – Frontenac Lennox & Addington
District 22 – Etobicoke and York
District 28 – Region of Durham
District 33 – Chatham-Kent
District 40 – Brant

\$500 - \$999

District 3 – Algoma
District 5 – Cochrane & Temiskaming
District 12 – Norfolk
District 23 – North York
District 36 – Peterborough

\$499 and under

District 1 – Rainy River
District 4 – Sudbury & Manitoulin
District 9 – Huron-Perth
District 17 – Simcoe County
District 21 – Renfrew

District 27 – Ottawa-Carleton
District 29 – Lanark
District 31 – Wellington
District 37 – Oxford

District 41 – Elgin
District 43 – Nipissing
District 45 – EstaRio
District 46 – Muskoka