

A Brief History of Toronto Metropolitan University

Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU) history is rooted in innovative, career-driven education with the goal of addressing contemporary societal needs. From day one, the mission has been unique – to serve societal need and to prepare students for careers. For more than 75 years, the university's commitment to groundbreaking thinking has grown steadily stronger.

TMU has pioneered experiential learning approaches, launched programs in innovation and entrepreneurship and enhanced our scholarly, research and creative (SRC) capacity, all while being a leader in equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Ryerson Institute of Technology, with some 250 students, was established in 1948 by the Government of Ontario as an experiment in post-secondary technical education. In 1963, the *Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act* changed the school's name and established it as an independent institution with its own Board of Governors (Board).

In 1968, Ryerson became the first post-secondary institution in Canada to invite students and faculty to serve on its Board. They continue to participate on both the Board and Academic Council, along with alumni and staff.

A 1971 amendment to the Act empowered the Institute to confer the degrees of Bachelor of Applied Arts and Bachelor of Technology, in addition to its traditional diplomas and certificates.

In 1977, a new Act extended degree designations to include Bachelor of Business Administration. It also formally established a bicameral system of governance under which the Board remained responsible for the financial management and conduct of the Institute, while Academic Council established educational policy, subject to spending restraints set by the Board.

In the spring of 1993, the *Ryerson Polytechnic University Statute Law Amendment Act* granted Ryerson full university status and established it as Canada's only polytechnic university. In the summer of 2002, an Act of the provincial legislature officially renamed Ryerson Polytechnic University to Ryerson University.

In the spring of 2007, an Act of the provincial legislature officially amended the Act in the following ways:

- Changed the name of Academic Council to "Senate"
- Increased the Senate's membership from 50 to 51 by adding the Chief Librarian as a member
- Extended Board members' terms to three consecutive terms
- Removed the requirement for citizenship and residency for Board Members

The university was originally named after Ontario's first Superintendent of Education and leading public school advocate, Egerton Ryerson. Over the past decade, the university has worked to address Egerton Ryerson's legacy, leading to a 2010 statement about his role and, in 2018, the installation of a plaque next to the Egerton Ryerson statue on campus. The statement and plaque contextualized his role in the creation of Canada's residential school system, which was devastating to Indigenous peoples in Canada.

In November 2020, following global conversations on the challenging legacies of many historical figures, President Mohamed Lachemi struck a task force to examine the history and legacy of Egerton Ryerson, and to make recommendations for reconciliation and commemoration on our campus.

The Standing Strong Task Force delivered their final report to the university in August 2021, which was unanimously approved by the Board of Governors, resulting in the historic and bold decision to rename the university along with 21 other action-oriented recommendations including more support for Indigenous and Black scholarship and a commitment to establish learning opportunities for students, faculty and staff on Indigenous history and the Indian residential school system. In December 2022, an Act of the provincial legislature officially renamed Ryerson University to Toronto Metropolitan University.

TMU is currently recognized as a leading institution for research and innovation, ranking among Canada's top five comprehensive research universities in Research Infosource's latest rankings. Within the past decade, the university has launched various research centres and institutes, as well as the Zone Learning option for students and business professionals interested in entrepreneurship. In 2020, the university opened the Lincoln Alexander School of Law, and in 2021 the government approved the development of a new school of medicine, to be located in Brampton, Ontario.

In 2023, TMU celebrated three significant anniversaries - 75 years as a school, 30 years as a university and 1 year under our new name. This milestone year saw the inaugural convocation of our first cohort of graduates from the Lincoln Alexander School of Law, Toronto's first new law school in over 100 years. It also saw considerable advancements in our efforts to deliver a new kind of medical school in Brampton.

September 2025 saw the official opening of the TMU School of Medicine. The inaugural cohort of 94 undergraduate medical learners were selected from more than 6,400 applicants. It also welcomed its first cohort of post-graduate medical learners, consisting of 105 resident physicians in July 2025. Also in Brampton, the Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst, celebrated its fifth anniversary in 2024 and announced \$16 million in renewed funding from its founding partners, Rogers Communications and RBC. In June of 2024, the for-profit arm of TMU's DMZ incubator - DMZ Ventures - unveiled a new fund for high-potential early-stage startups, committing up to \$5 million to support the Canadian innovation ecosystem in a strategic new way. 2024 also saw TMU expanding its research capacity in areas of strength, as we welcomed our second Canada

Excellence Research Chair (CERC), Karen Soldatić, in the field of health equity and community wellbeing - empowered by an \$8 million, eight-year program.

The University has two campus locations, at the heart of downtown Toronto and in Brampton, Ontario, where the School of Medicine is located. It has motivated numerous strategic partnerships with surrounding businesses and spaces in Toronto and the Peel Region. The most significant recent development is the construction of four buildings: the Mattamy Athletic Centre at Toronto's historic Maple Leaf Gardens, the award-winning Student Learning Centre on Yonge Street, the Daphne Cockwell Health Sciences Complex, and the Centre for Urban Innovation. In 2025, TMU broke ground to build the new Student Wellbeing Centre, an eight-storey mass timber addition to the historic O'Keefe House, located at 137 Bond Street. Also on Bond Street, a new TMU residence is expected to be completed by 2030.