

Wendy Cukier

Dr. Wendy Cukier is a professor of Entrepreneurship and Strategy at the Ted Rogers School of Management, founder and Academic Director of the Diversity Institute and Research Lead of the Future Skills Centre. She is the former VP of Research and Innovation and has authored more than 200 articles on aspects of diversity, inclusion and innovation. She leads Toronto Metropolitan University's Diversity Institute which has 130 research staff, 100 research associates from around the world and more than 200 industry partners focused on dimensions of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, future skills, and entrepreneurship. She also leads the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub, funded by the Government of Canada which promotes inclusive supports for women and other diverse entrepreneurs and the Inclusive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Network (IIE-Net). She is also the research lead for the Future Skills Centre with a comprehensive research agenda and supporting innovative pilot projects.

Wendy is a recognized leader in equity, diversity and inclusion in Canada who has brought together a network of like-minded academic, business and community leaders and uses research to influence government policy and industry practices. The DiversityLeads project, started in 2008 under her leadership, was among the first studies to move beyond gender to examine the representation and experience of racialized people in senior leadership roles in all major cities across Canada. Her work helped shape Bill C-25 and the 50-30 Challenge. The Diversity Institute is now an ecosystem partner supporting organizations that sign up for the 50-30 Challenge committing to gender parity and increased diversity on their boards and/or senior leadership roles. The Institute is also developing a Diversity Assessment Tool.

Wendy is also a well-regarded champion of social justice, she has pioneered the adaptation of ecological models of complex systems change. She was responsible for the gender plus analysis of more than 1000 social innovation projects as part of the European Union's SI DRIVE initiative. She spearheaded Toronto Metropolitan University's social innovation strategy and the University to become Canada's first Ashoka Changemaker Campus. She also created the Lifeline Syria Challenge which mobilized 1000 volunteers and raised \$5m to privately sponsor more than 400 Syrian refugees, and most recently co-founded Lifeline Afghanistan and Lifeline Challenge which supports improved pathways for immigration, credential recognition, education, training and employment as well as resettlement to Canada by newcomers from around the world.

Wendy has been recognized with the Harry Jerome Diversity Award, the Bob Marley Award, the Metropolis Research Award, and recognized in the 100 Most Powerful Women by WXN. She has been named a YWCA Woman of Distinction, one of the "100 Alumni who shaped the Century" by the University of Toronto and International Women's Forum 2020 Women Who Make a Difference. She is a recipient of Canada's Meritorious Service Cross, one of Canada's highest civilian honours. She has also received honorary doctorates from Laval and Concordia universities and is the founder of several startups, social enterprises and nonprofits.