**Aging Proactively - CAFE Press Release**

[*National Impact Challenge 2023*](https://agewell-nce.ca/national-impact-challenge)

*Bold Innovations for Living*

*powered by AGE-WELL and SE Health*

**Halifax, NS June 16th, 2023**

[Aging Proactively](https://www.agingproactively.com/), the Canadian affiliate for the [Age Friendly Institute](https://institute.agefriendly.org/initiatives/certified-age-friendly-employer-program/), has been selected as a finalist is piloting a certification program for Age Friendly Employers.  Aging proActively is one of the four community-based finalists in the *National Impact Challenge 2023 – Bold Innovations for Living, powered by AGE-WELL and SE Health.* Dr. Mary Kilfoil will be pitching the CAFE certification program in Toronto on June 22nd. The [official list of presenters](https://agewell-nce.ca/impact/finalists-in-the-national-impact-challenge-2023-bold-innovations-for-living-powered-by-age-well-and-se-health) has been released! Interesting to note that at the top of the list for the Startups category is Axtion Independence Mobility, an Atlantic CDL (Creative Destruction Lab) company - the team that Mary brought to Boston in April 2022 to compete in the Revolutionize pitch competition. Members of the public can vote for the [People’s Choice Award](https://agewell-nce.ca/national-impact-challenge#vote) in both the Startup and Community categories.

[**Aging proActively**](https://www.agingproactively.com/), a non-profit Community-Based Seniors Serving Organisation (CBSSO), has launched and is scaling the Certified Age Friendly Employer (CAFE) program in Canada. Mature adults will be positioned to extend their health-span, enhance their financial security, engage in meaningful work, thereby, improving their ability to age in place. Employers improve their bottom line by recruiting and retaining experienced older adults.

The Canadian Certified Age-Friendly Employer (CAFE) program is based on the CAFÉ program developed by the Age Friendly Institute using a team of analysts and professionals with specializations in human resources, compensation, and benefits. The team began establishing best practices for an age-friendly employers in 2006.

Older adults too frequently find their age negatively affects their chances of finding or keeping a job.  With the CAFE program, now international in scope, they know whose doors to knock on first when it comes to finding employment.

“This is a win-win-win situation.  It helps older adults, employers and government leaders seeking to grow their tax base,” said Age Friendly Institute President Tim Driver.  “Older adults stay healthy by staying engaged.  They add to, and subtract less from, their nest eggs.  Employers expand their diversity efforts, acquire and keep valuable talent.  Economies expand because there are more people in the workforce contributing to productivity.”

In Canada, the CAFE program Affiliate Aging Proactively is making inroads with Canadian employers, including working with 20 TIANS (Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia) members. Mary Kilfoil, lead for the CAFE rollout across Canada, said "employers are welcoming the opportunity to embrace older adults, apply a proven standard about what is required to be age-friendly, and learn best practices and benchmarks from like-minded employers." Co-lead Ed Leach said "with increased longevity, older adults are a value-add to economic growth, rather than a challenge. The employers we speak with are excited to learn where they stand versus their industry peers."

TIANS has implemented a multifaceted strategy to support tourism operators address labour shortages which are restricting capacity and growth. Along with partnering in the CAFE pilot, a [Mature Workforce commercial](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmcCu84Rxw0) was developed that highlights the variety of tourism work opportunities. “TIANS believes the mature workforce holds tremendous value and potential for the industry,” said Darlene Grant Fiander, TIANS President. “Tourism employment can provide meaningful connections to the community, generate additional income, and provide mentoring opportunities for individuals to share experience and knowledge. TIANS is proud to be leading the inaugural designations in Canada for the CAFE program with Aging Proactively,” added Grant Fiander.

**Notes:**

In spite of the decline of employment in the tourism sector during COVID, the latest forecast from Tourism HR Canada notes that for Canada as a whole the sector will be 250,000 workers short in the summer 2023. At the end of 2019, tourism accounted for 748,000 direct jobs and just over 2 million in total both direct and indirect employment. One out of every ten workers in Canada had a job related to tourism.

The shortage of labor in the Nova Scotia tourism sector is having a significant impact on the industry. Employers are struggling to fill positions, which can lead to decreased customer satisfaction, reduced productivity, and lower profitability. In some cases, businesses may even have to close or reduce their operations due to the labor shortage.

**Additional Notes on National Impact Challenge:**

[**National Impact Challenge 2023 – Bold Innovations for Living Pitch Night**](https://agewell-nce.ca/national-impact-challenge#vote)– Aging proactively, along with 3 other finalists in the Community impact category, will pitch their innovative and impactful solutions for aging with choice and dignity.
[*The National Impact Challenge – Bold Innovations for Living*powered by **AGE-WELL** and **SE Health**](https://agewell-nce.ca/national-impact-challenge)aims to move the dial when it comes to supporting older adults and caregivers in Canada.

Finalists will pitch their technology, innovative program, or service to a panel of expert judges in a 5-minute pitch presentation followed by a 5-minute Q&A session. They will explain how their solution can positively impact older Canadians and caregivers as they compete for cash prizes and in-kind services.

The challenge is focused on three themes:
 **1. Aging in Place & Community:***How can we enable older adults to age in the place of their choosing?*

* Supportive Homes & Communities
* Support Networks or Community Building
* Products, Tools, and Strategies to Support Living at Home (e.g. Everyday Tasks, Services)
* Cognitive & Mental Health

**2.** **Living with Purpose & Meaning:***How can we reimagine how older adults can contribute their skills, talents, and years of experience towards a new purpose?*

* Staying Connected, Intergenerational Programs
* Financial Wellness & Employment; Reimagining Work – Transition to 3rd Act (e.g. Working Part-Time, Mentoring)

Aging *pro*Actively submitted under Theme 2 - **Living with Purpose & Meaning:***How can we reimagine how older adults can contribute their skills, talents, and years of experience towards a new purpose?*

The winner in each category will receive $25,000 in cash plus in-kind prizes. The runner-up in each category may be eligible for a $10,000 prize. Winners and runners-up will partake in the post-pitch mentorship program where they will have access to 1) mentors, 2) networking opportunities through AGE-WELL and SE Health’s knowledge, expertise, and partners in the aging ecosystem and 3) end-user engagement to co-design, testing, validation and promotion of their products or services.

[**AGE WELL**](https://agewell-nce.ca/national-impact-challenge) is a unique Canadian network that brings everyone together to develop technologies and services for healthy aging. We’re also training the next generation of innovators in this field, and making Canada a world leader in technologies that help aging populations everywhere.

[**SE Health**](https://sehc.com/about/about-us)is a leading social enterprise and one of the largest diversified home health organizations in Canada. The SE family includes a dedicated research centre, health career college, futures lab and global enterprise. Together with the Saint Elizabeth Foundation and diverse partners, we have facilitated transformative solutions in the areas of aging, education, Indigenous health and end of life care.

Pitch Night: Thursday, June 22, 2023 @ 3 PM - 6 PM ET
The LOFT (7th Floor) @ SPACES QUEEN WEST (180 John Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1X5)