

Age-Inclusive Environments: It's All Connected



May 21, 2025

Nina M. Silverstein, PhD
Professor Emerita, Gerontology
University of Massachusetts Boston, USA

Nina.Silverstein@UMB.edu



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

RESEARCH TEAM

- ❖ Joann M. Montepare, PhD, Lasell University
- ❖ Susan Krauss Whitbourne, PhD, University of Massachusetts Boston
- ❖ Lauren Marshall Bowen, PhD, University of Massachusetts Boston



Overview

- **WHY?** The Call for More Age-Inclusive Environments
- **WHO?** The Models
- **HOW?** Education
- **WHAT?** Evidence-Based Strategy Recommendations
- **RESOURCES TO EXPLORE**



Global Aging

Population aging is a global phenomenon, with people over 65 years old comprising the world's fastest-growing age group. As a result, the proportion of the world population aged 65 and above is expected to rise from 10% in 2022 to 16% in 2050;

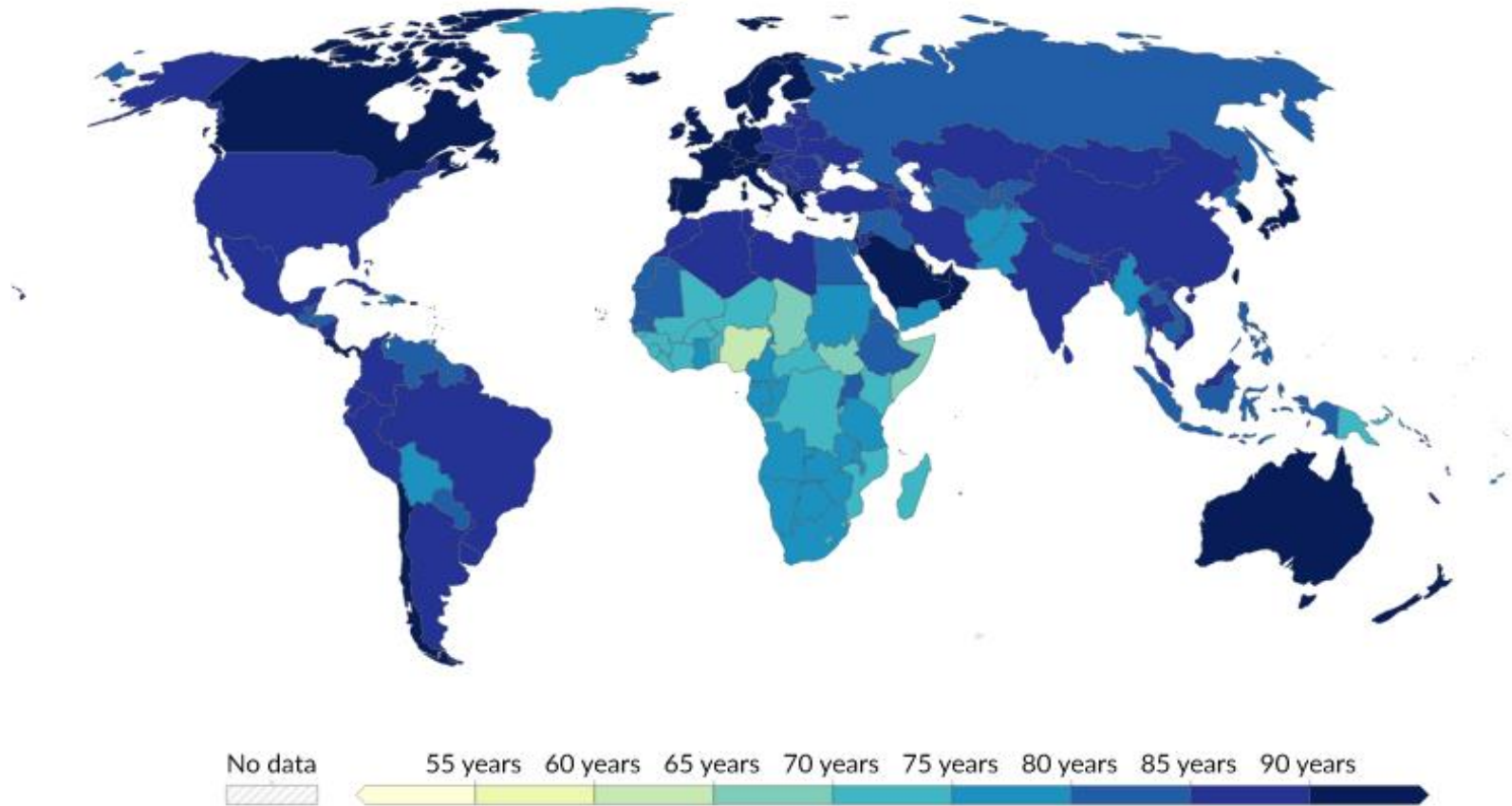
By 2050, the number of persons aged 65 years or over worldwide is projected to be more than twice the number of children under age 5 and about the same as the number of children under age 12.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2022). World Population Prospects 2022: Summary of Results. UN DESA/POP/2022/TR/NO. 3.

Life expectancy projections, 2100

Our World
in Data

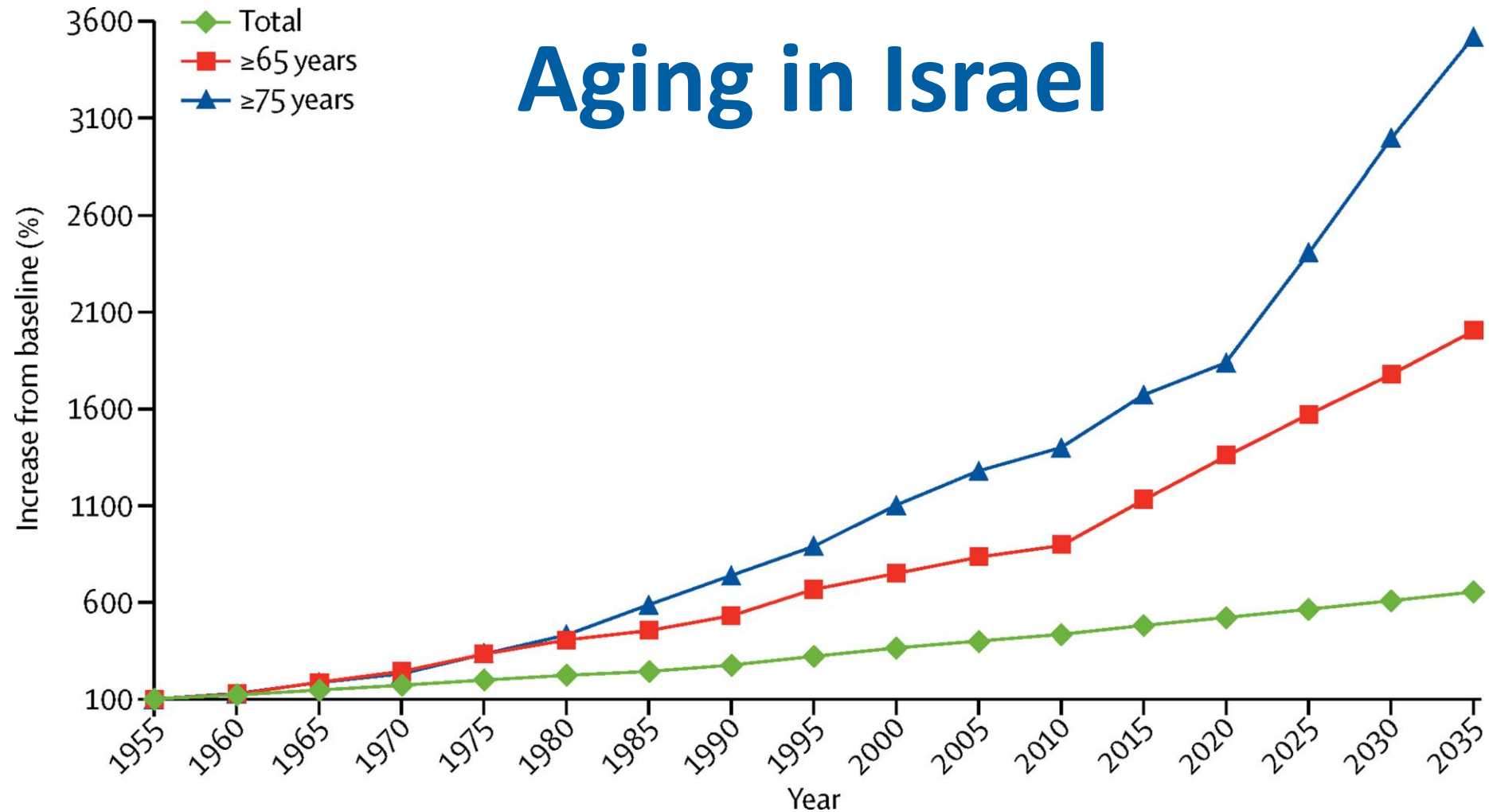
Projections for the period life expectancy at birth, in the future. This is based on the UN's mid-variant projections.



Data source: UN, World Population Prospects (2024)

OurWorldinData.org/life-expectancy | CC BY

Aging in Israel



[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)30789-4/abstract](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)30789-4/abstract)

Aging in Israel

- Population of persons age 65+ = about 1.252 million (694,000 women and 559,000 men). (cbs.gov.il, 2024)
 - About 44% of the persons age 65+ age 75 and older.
- In 2023, life expectancy at birth was 81.0 years for men and 85.5 years for women. Life expectancy at age 65 was 20.3 years for men and 22.9 years for women.
 - Healthy life expectancy at age 65 was 12.0 years for men and 11.4 years for women.

https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/mediarelease/doclib/2024/311/11_24_311e.pdf

Some Age-Inclusive Trends on Campus in Israel

- In 2022, 5,652 persons aged 65+ studied in vocational training courses, composing 5.8% of total students in these courses.
- In 2022/23, 278 students aged 65+ received degrees (or academic certificates) from institutions of higher education in Israel (319 in the previous year).
- In 2023, 21.7% of persons aged 65+ participated in the labor force (28.6% among men and 16.0% among women).

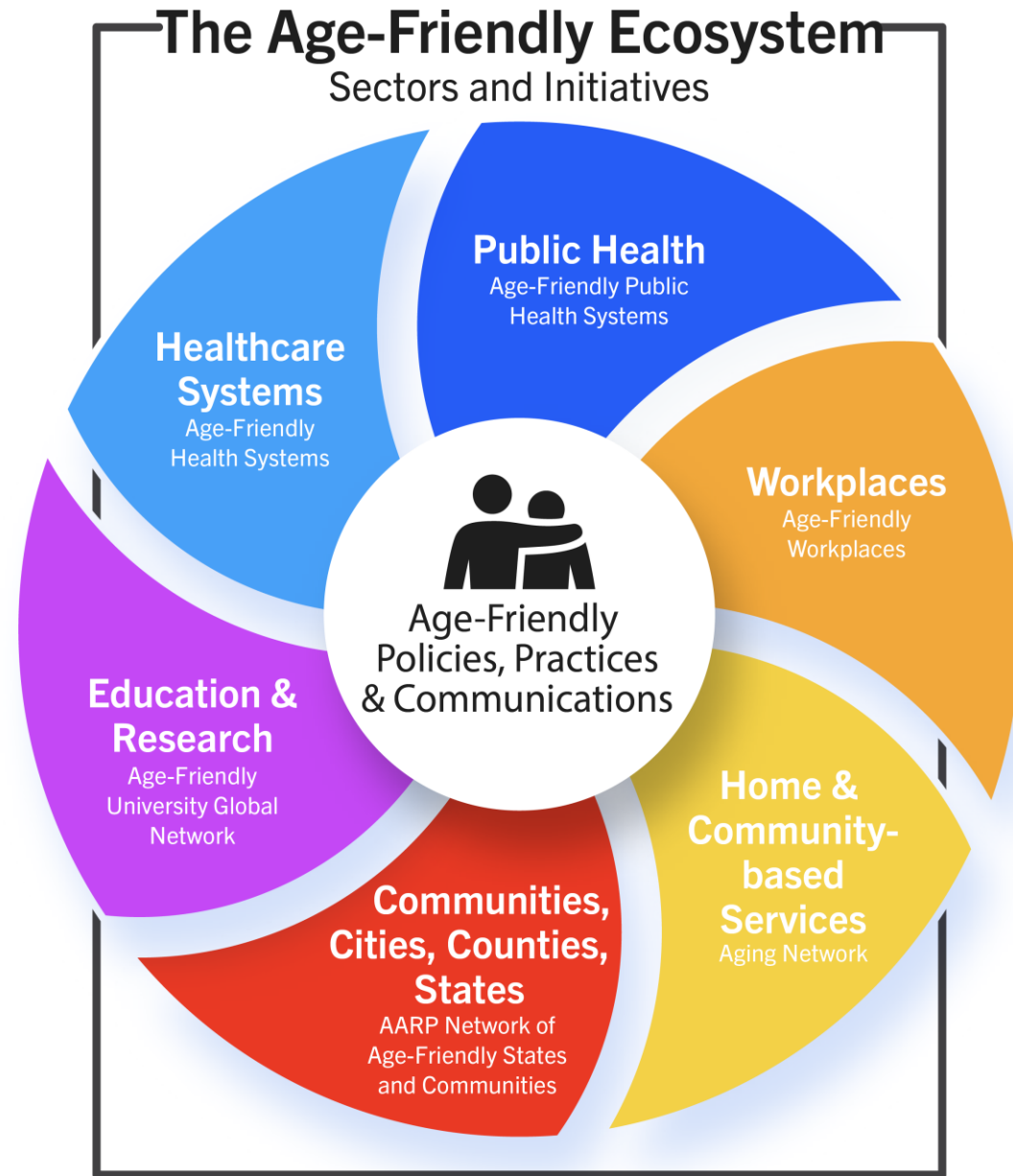
https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/mediarelease/doclib/2024/311/11_24_311e.pdf

Why Care about Age Inclusivity?

Important for societies
to support older
individuals in being
healthy, active and
engaged in public life --

Dismantle Ageism

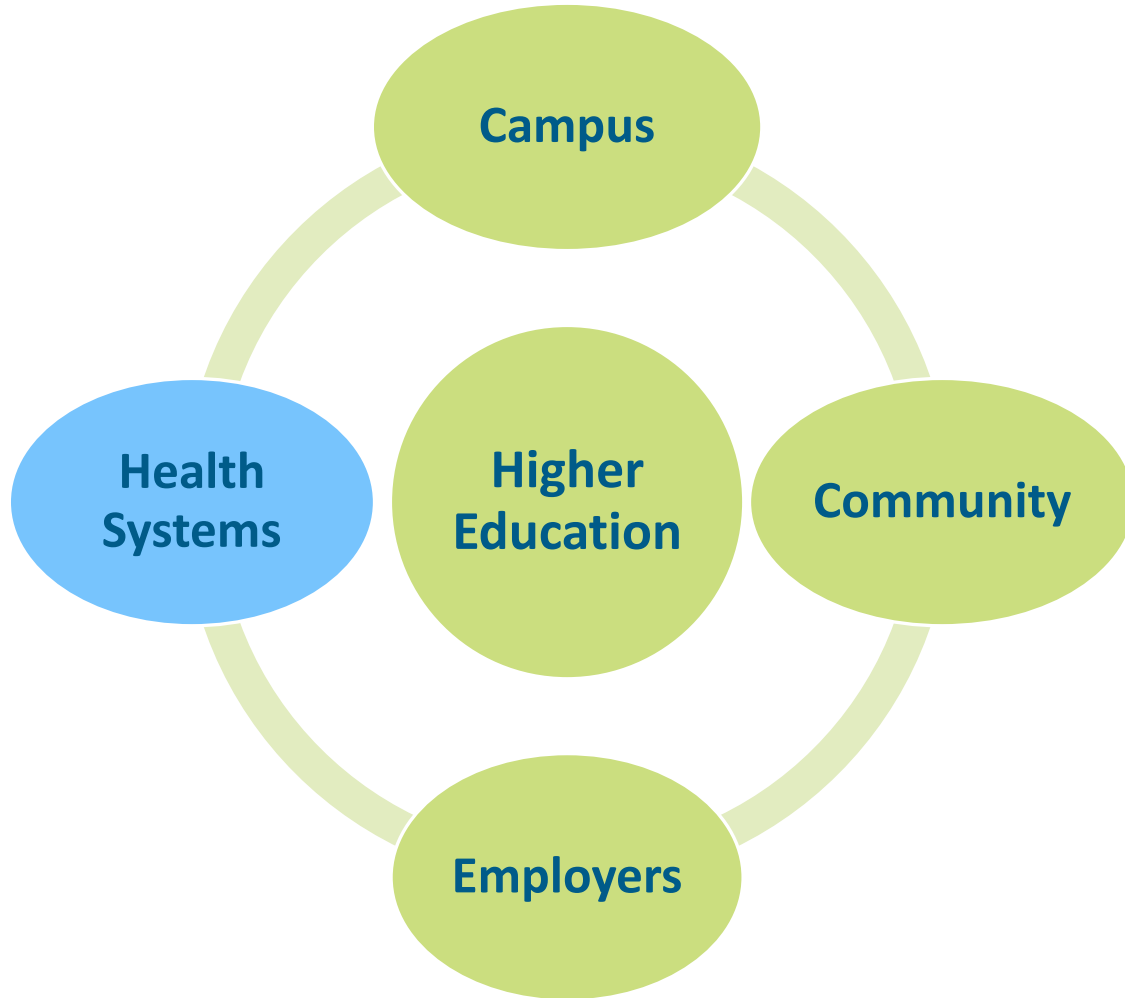
Where Might You Make a Difference?



Advancing Age-Friendly Ecosystem Efforts



Advancing Age-Friendly Ecosystem Efforts



Training and
Mentoring

Research

Program
Design

Program
Evaluation

Public
Discourse

Address
Disparities



TRY & THIS

Dementia Series

Best Practices in Nursing Care to Older Adults

Wandering in Hospitalized Older Adults

By: Nina M. Silverstein, PhD, University of Massachusetts Boston, and Gerald Flaherty,
Executive Council, AARP Massachusetts

memory concentration thinking reasoning
memory concentration thinking reasoning
memory concentration thinking reasoning
memory concentration thinking reasoning
memory concentration thinking reasoning
memory concentration thinking reasoning
memory concentration thinking reasoning

Improving Hospital Care for Persons with Dementia

Nina M. Silverstein
Katie Maslow
Editors

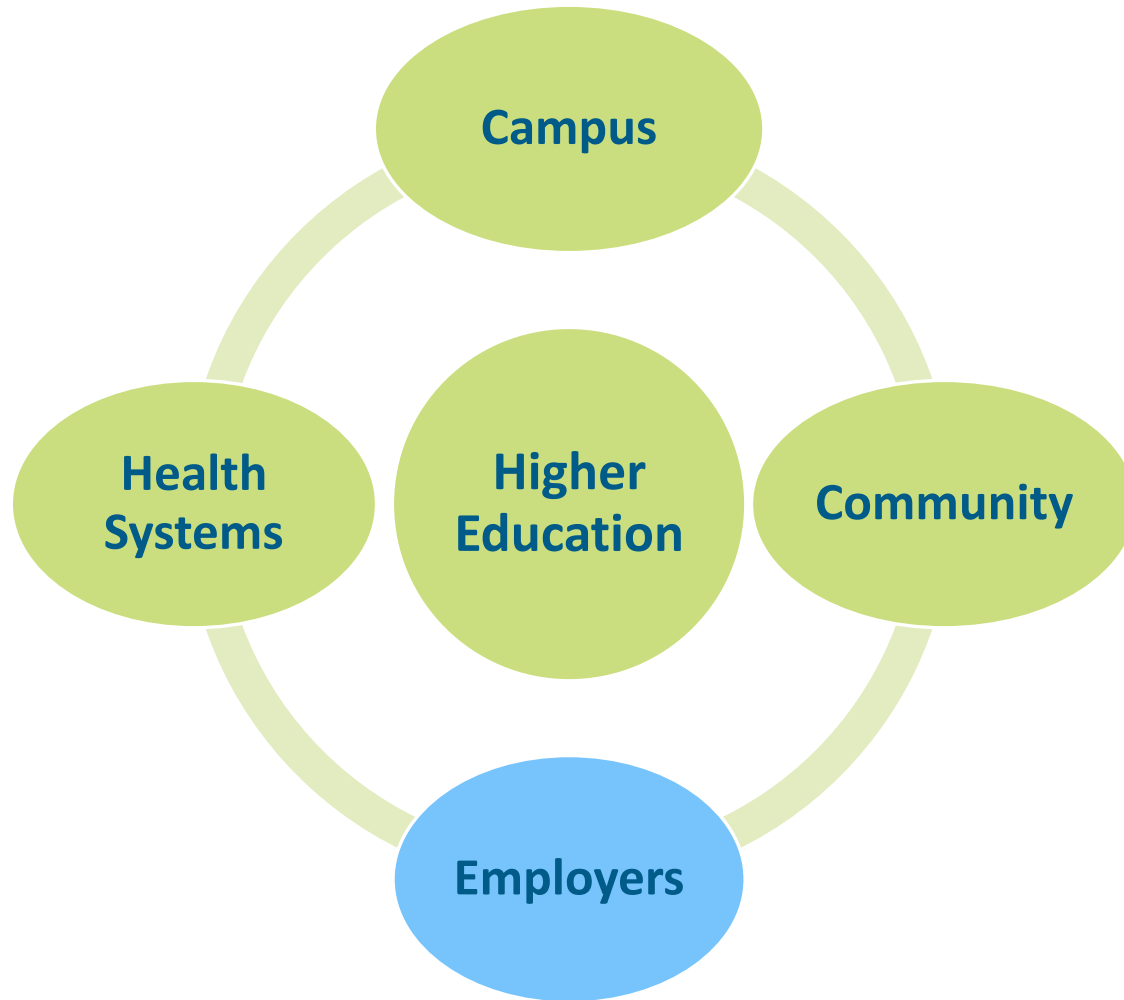


MEITAV Program

It's all about the people

<https://hign.org/consultgeri/try-this/dementia>

Advancing Age-Friendly Ecosystem Efforts



Aging Literacy

Reframing Aging

Training and Skill Advancement

Employment Pipelines

Research and Evaluation

TRENDS AND ISSUES

FEBRUARY 2012



PROMOTING WORKPLACE LONGEVITY AND DESIRABLE RETIREMENT PATHWAYS WITHIN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Brian Kaskie, Ph.D.
University of Iowa

Kevin Leicht, Ph.D.
University of Iowa

Steven Hitlin, Ph.D.
University of Iowa

Brian created the Colorado Age Inclusive Management Strategies (AIMS) platform that offers information for employers to learn about the positive value to recruiting and retaining experienced employees, and offers a set of organizational assessments to identify different strategies that might be pursued

AGE- AND DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY BUSINESS CHECKLIST

(Please complete with business ambassador)

To be certified, business owner or manager must:

- ☐ Complete a training on communicating with older adults and adults with dementia created by City of Boston (DF)

In addition, you must check off any combination of **seven** no/low- and higher-cost items. Three must also be dementia friendly (designated by a "DF" symbol)

NO/LOW COST ITEMS

BUILDING AND ATMOSPHERE

☐ **LIGHTING (DF)**

Lighting is bright and uniform to reduce glare/avoid dark spaces

☐ **NOISE LEVEL**

Background music and ambient noise are quiet or non-existent

☐ **SIGNAGE**

Stairways, inclines/declines, and obstacles/hazards are clearly marked

☐ **FLOORS**

All floors are non-slip, non-shiny, kept clean and dry

☐ **GLASS DOORS (DF)**

Glass doors must be clearly marked

☐ **DEMENTIA SEATING (DF)**

Avoid seating people with dementia near windows and mirrors with glare

☐ **RESTING AREAS**

Resting areas are available near entrances to buildings

☐ **BATHROOMS**

Bathrooms are open and available to the public

COMMUNICATION

☐ **FONTS & LANGUAGE (DF)**

Written items are easy to read and placed at eye level, using large font

☐ **SYMBOLS (DF)**

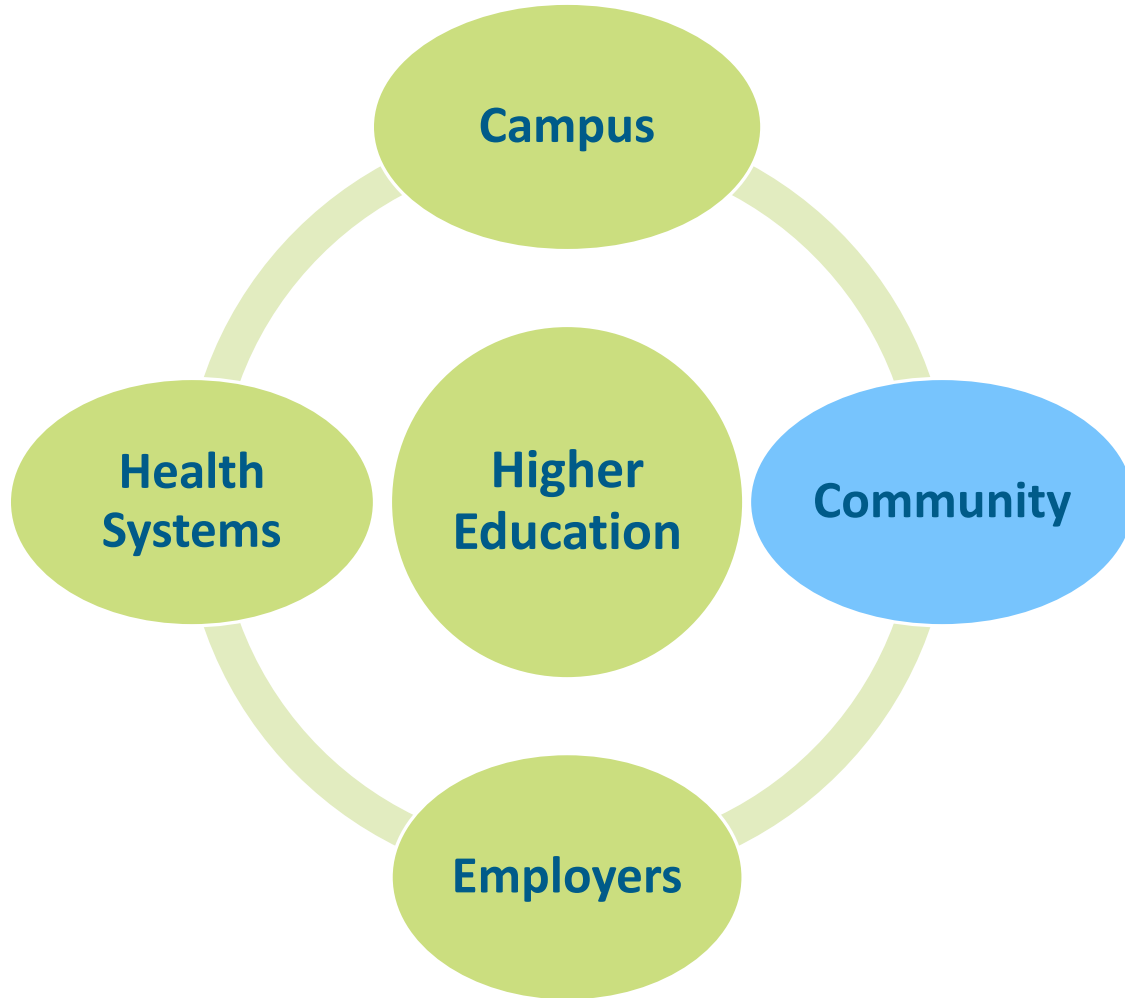
Use universal symbols when possible (ex: arrows, bathrooms)

OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT

☐ **WALKWAYS**

Walkways are free of obstructions

Advancing Age-Friendly Ecosystem Efforts



Baseline Research



Targeted Assessment



Resource Development



Strategic Planning



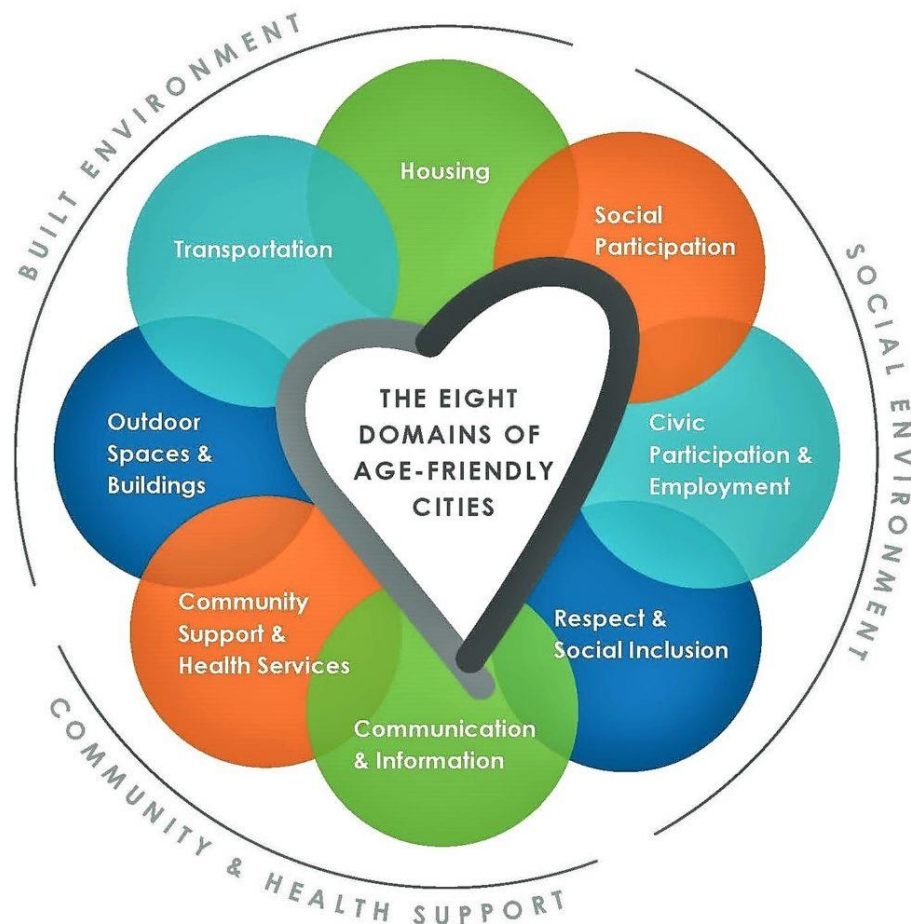
Program Development



Program Implementation



Student Engagement



Optimal Aging in an Era of Living to 100

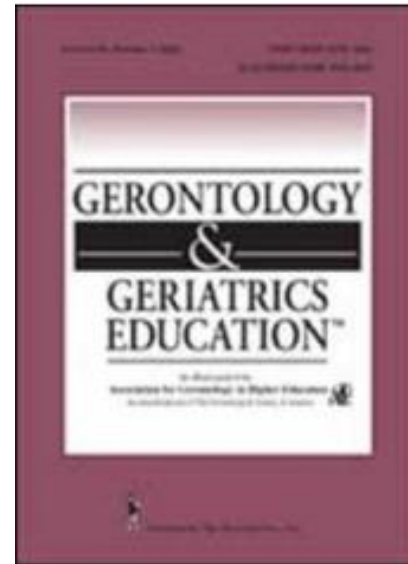
Muni-100 (Transitioning all local authorities into age friendly locations)





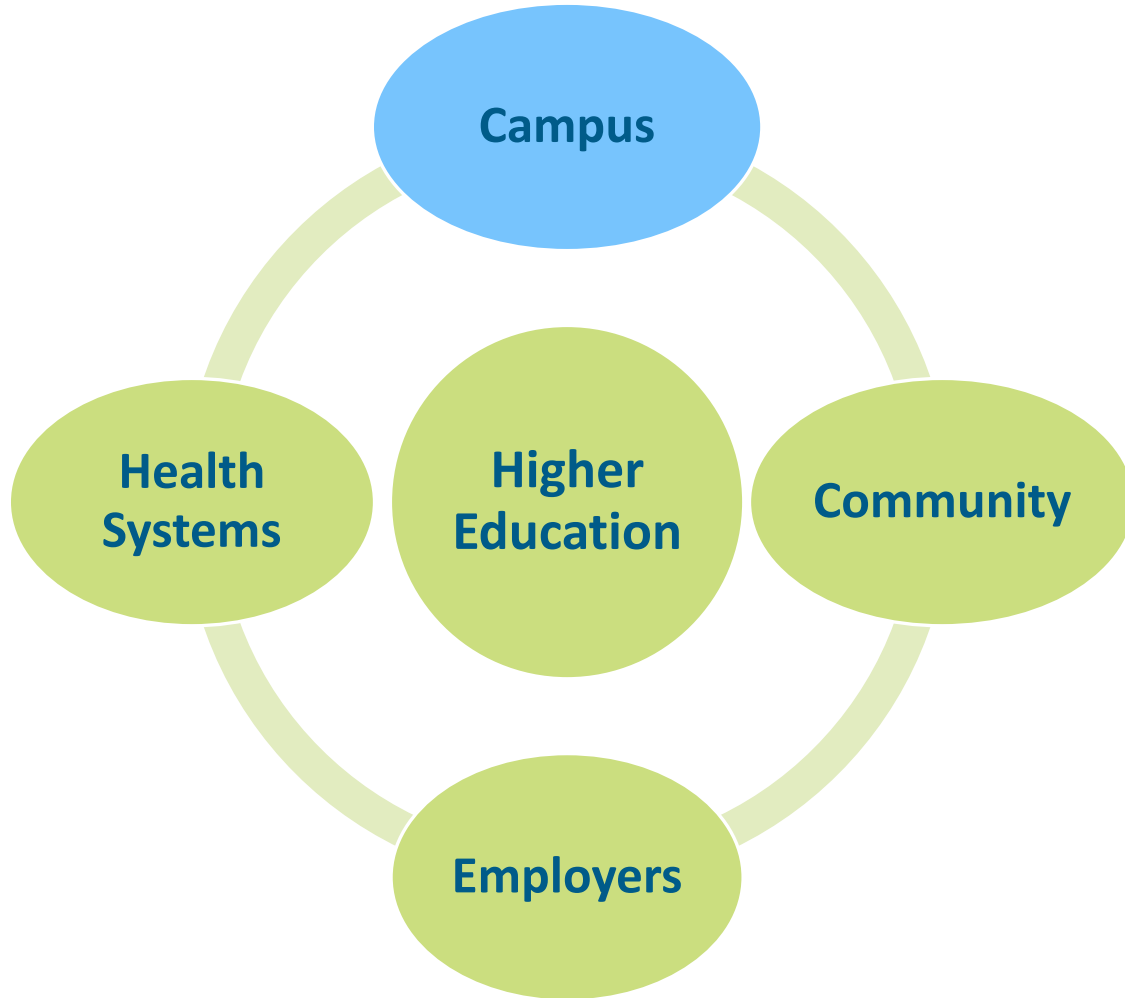
Students Explore Livable Communities

Both drivability and walkability challenges are apparent on this narrow, one-way street in Beacon Hill, Boston, MA (Photo by student Yumi Nakagawa)



Silverstein, N. M. , Johns, E., & Griffin, J. A.(2008), Students Explore Livable Communities, Gerontology & Geriatrics Education, 29: 1, 19 — 37

Advancing Age-Friendly Ecosystem Efforts



Raise Awareness



Research (Needs, Practices)



Develop Practices (Impact, Priority, Feasibility, Likelihood)



Engage Leaders in Higher Education

The Call for More Age-Inclusive Campuses

Our population is older and more age-diverse than ever

The enrollment *cliff* can be an economic *lift*

Lifelong learners seek professional *and* personal development

Higher education is a destination *and* an engine

Faculty and staff are aging in place on campuses

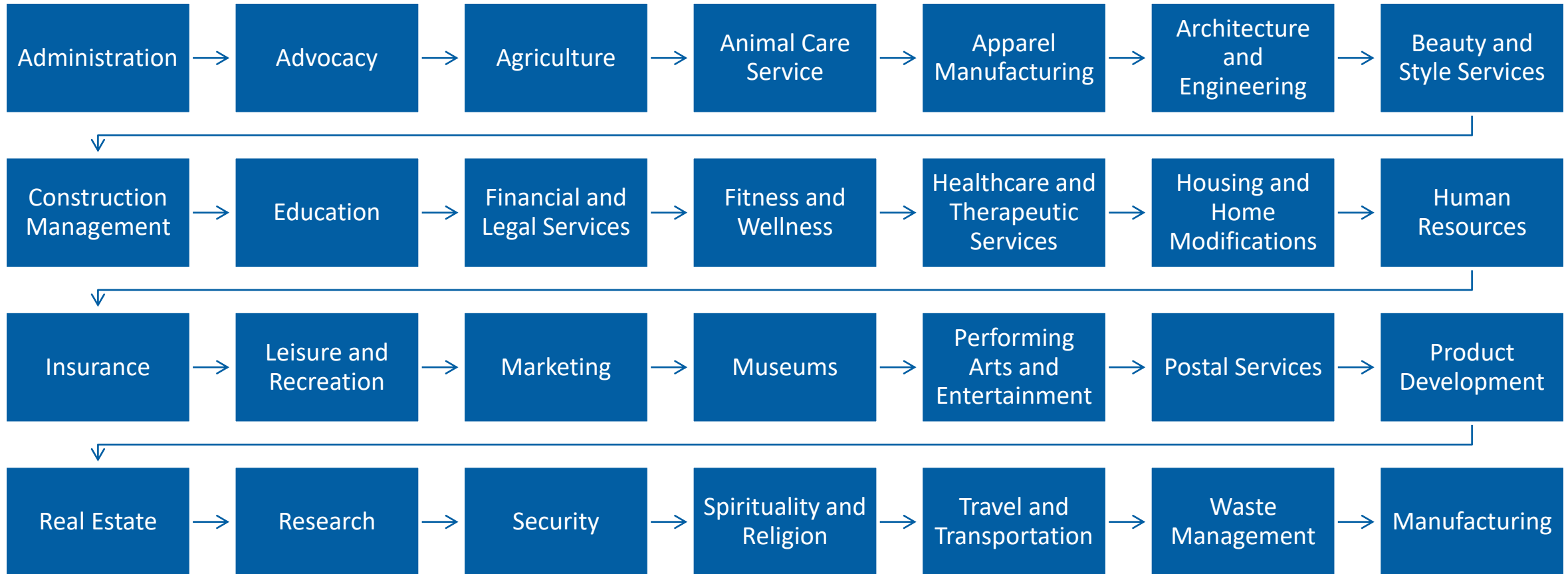
Ageism continues to be pervasive

The age-friendly ecosystem is expanding

**Age inclusivity
benefits
everyone**

Career Opportunities—Imagination—Entrepreneur

<https://exploringcareersinaging.com>

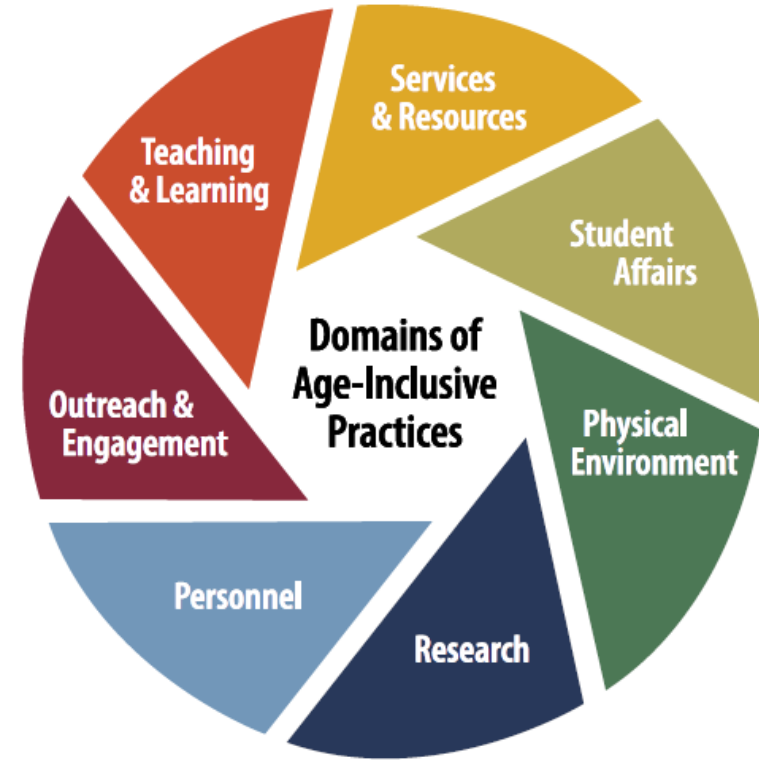


Campus Initiatives



Age-Friendly
University
Global Network

AFU_GN offers 10 Principles to promote lifelong learning, intergenerational exchange, aging-focused education and research.



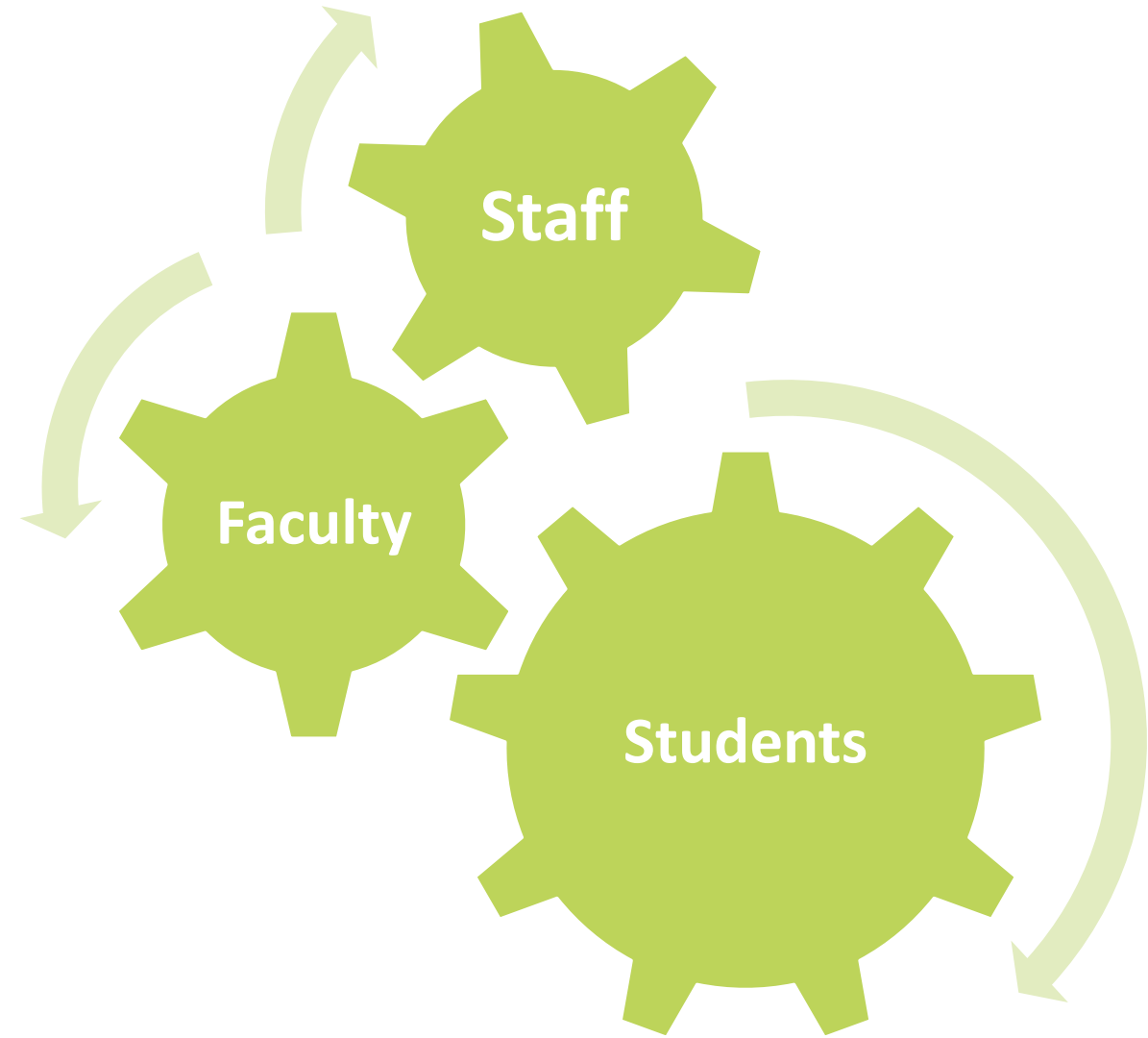
Age Inclusivity Domains of Higher Education (AIDHE) model advocates that campus practices reflect age-diverse students, faculty, and staff across seven core institutional domains.

Touchpoints Across the Lifespan: Creating Opportunities on Campuses

- Entering or re-entering the workforce
- Gaining training or certifications for new types of work
- Adapting to AI and other scientific or technological effects on careers
- Pivoting from one career to another
- “Retiring” from full-time employment to consulting, self-employment
- Maintaining active relationships with institutions as alumni and retired faculty



AIDHE
**Age-Inclusive
Practices for
Age-Diverse
Campuses**



Some AIDHE Recommendations

- Campus-Wide Strategies



- Teaching & Learning



- Personnel



- Student Affairs



Campus-Wide Strategies

Raise	Inform	Assess
Increase awareness of age diversity, friendliness, and inclusivity on campus.	Provide information and education on age bias and working in an age-diverse environment.	Survey older students, faculty, and staff to identify their specific resource needs.

Bowen, L. M., Silverstein, N., Whitbourne, S.K., Montepare, J. M., et al., (2024). Evidence-based strategies for creating age-inclusive campuses. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*

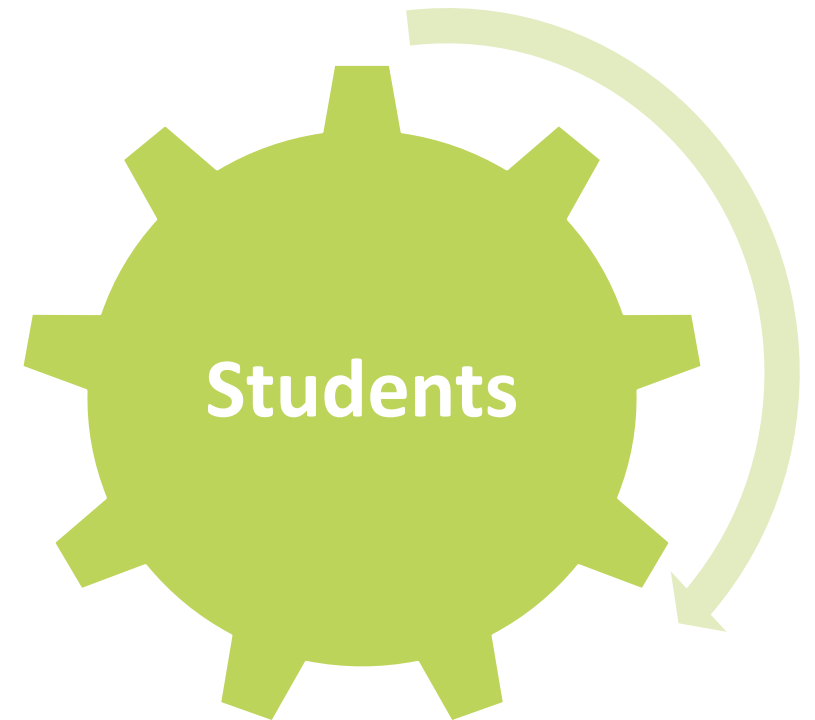
TEACHING & LEARNING

challenges reflect the experience of age bias by older students and faculty, the lack of learning support for older students, and a disregard for the assets of age diversity in the classroom.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

challenges reflect limitations in admissions policies, financial aid, career services, and related student programs geared towards the needs of older students.

- Curriculum
 - Pedagogy
 - Flexibility
 - Accessibility
 - Advising
-
- Recruitment
 - Admissions
 - Scheduling
 - Orientations
 - Counseling
 - Career



PERSONNEL

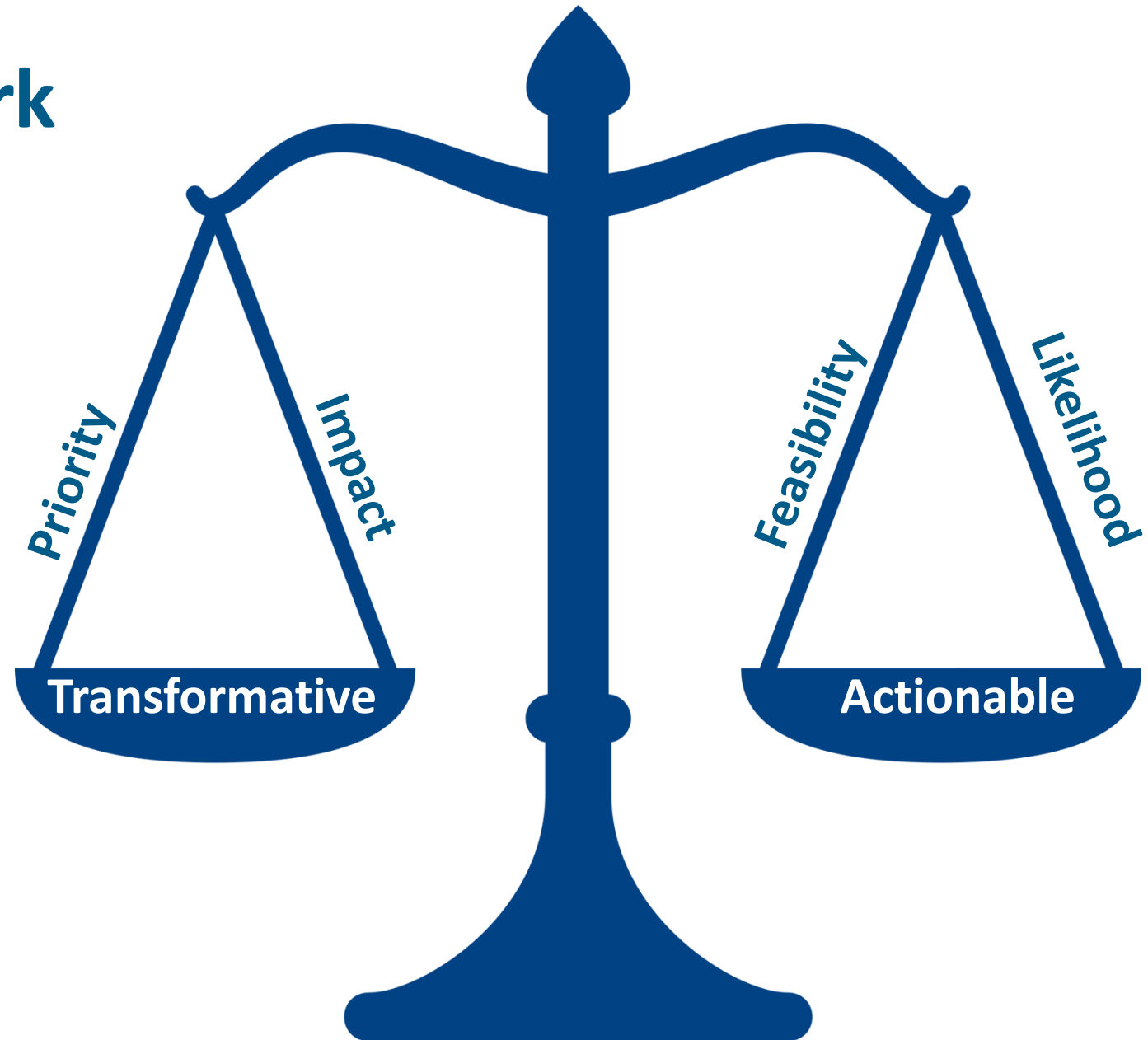
challenges reflect age biases in employment practices, limitations in professional development and advancement opportunities for older faculty and staff, and a lack of recognition of long-standing employees.

- Bias Training
- Fairness
- Recruitment
- Promotions
- Professional Development
- Mentorship
- Compensation
- Salaries
- Recognition, Awards, Honors
- Retirement



What strategies will work for your campus?

Implementing age-inclusive strategies requires balancing the core capacities of your campus with the benefit of implementing potential practices.



Resources to Explore



Learning Center

Please Login

Log In

Home

Search this Site

Search by Category

Any

Search by Keyword

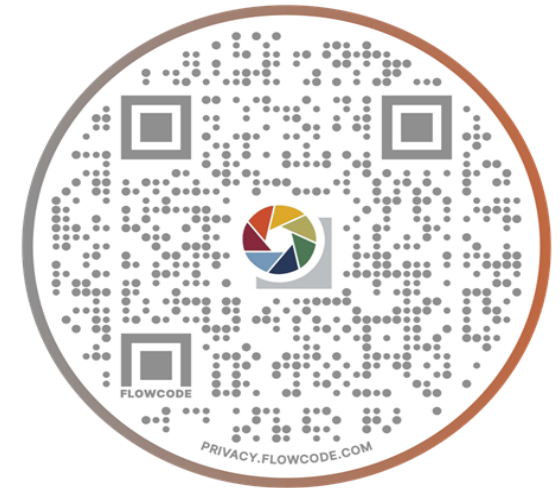
Keywords

Age Inclusivity in Higher Education



Geron.org Join GSA Connect

Aging populations mean more older adults are looking to higher education to meet their professional needs as they experience longer work lives. Similarly, many older adults plan to stay engaged in some form of learning for personal development—with institutions of higher education being an appealing educational destination. In addition to increased diversity in the age of learners, there is also increased age diversity among faculty, staff, alumni, and other communities of interest engaged with institutions of higher education.



<https://www.geron.org/AIHE>

GSA Insights & Implications in Gerontology

Learners for Life: The Future of Higher Education in the Era of Longevity



https://gsaenrich.geron.org/files/9d7f7737-e54d-4746-b2e9-713f2d623133?ref_id=19518

חודו

Questions?

Nina.Silverstein@umb.edu