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to addressing rural  
to opportunities.  
tory of collabora-

tive activities while enhancing resource capabilities  
and programming. As a leading source of infor-  
mation on rural areas, RDI continues to deliver new  
knowledge of rural issues and helps create opportu-  
nities for vibrant rural communities and regions.

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ing Dr. Carter, a  
y of Winnipeg

and former director of the Urban Studies Institute  
(the 'urban' version of RDI). The final product will  
point to key research directions for RDI over the  
next 3-5 years.



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## About RDI

It is hard to imagine that those involved in the discussions leading to the November 1989 agreement to establish the Rural Development Institute (RDI) would have anticipated how well it has achieved its potential. Yet through 25 years and countless projects, RDI has been able to establish and solidify a regional, national and international reputation in applied research. Working with collaborators and networks of community stakeholders and organizations, government agencies, and academics, it has helped set an informed agenda on a range of issues impacting rural and northern communities.



To mark and celebrate RDI's 25th anniversary, November 6<sup>th</sup> has been set aside to host *Rural Works: A Rural Policy Think Tank*. The day's events are anchored by a Keynote Address from the Hon. Ron Kostyshyn,

[See RDI Anniversary, p. 2](#)

**RDI Team**  
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Gillian Richards  
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Xanthe Zarry

## Applied Research...Community-Ba

### Rural Policy Learning Commons

Brandon University has received word that it was successful in its 7-year, \$2.5 M. SSHRC Partnership grant. The public launch of this achievement was made August 2th when the Hon. Ed Holder, Minister of State (Science and Technology) traveled to Brandon to make the announcement. A common thread among those who spoke at the event was the singular importance of building relationships and networks among those involved in devel-



At the announcement: Shari Decter Hurst, Brandon mayor; Dr Gervan Fearon, Brandon Uni-

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## Industry

opportunities arising from Manitoba's Food and Beverage Processing Industry. This project will highlight topics of a research project conducted over the past year. The project's Food Processing Industry Report talks were given in a series of presentations to industry representatives from Functional Foods and Food Processing on June 24<sup>th</sup> to the Board of the Manitoba Food Processors' Association. A presentation was presented at the meeting to members attending the meeting on processing, and Direct

hard questions and answers involving the sector for Lorraine Stevenson, RDI Co-operator to pen the report – see <http://www.brandonu.ca/2014/08/28/report-sounds>

For more information on this project, contact:

## Rural Greenhouse Gases

Project is working with research program, government agencies, and industry around shelterbelts to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions and improve efficiencies.

In the lead up to drafting the project's reports, Dr. Gillian Richards, Project Lead, is scheduled to present a webinar November 12 to review the project's activities and present a précis of the key findings.

Those interested in shelterbelt usage and their benefits are encouraged to visit the project website: <http://prairieshelterbelts.ca/>

and why serious debate is needed by all involved stakeholders.

On this issue of expanding Manitoba's agricultural and industrial base, RDI was funded by the Manitoba government to expand its research in food processing to address the particular issues, challenges, and growth opportunities through innovation facing the bulk food processing industry in Manitoba.

Given the diversity of those involved in this industry across the province, for this project, bulk processes are identified as companies that sell to manufacturer, bulk wholesalers, distributors, and businesses. Case studies of three Manitoba bulk food processors will be conducted to examine the barriers to and opportunities for growth and innovation in this industry. Given the complexity of factors affecting particular businesses in this industry, this research will examine the entire supply chain from farmers' field to food processing and then consumers.

For more information on this project, contact:

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and use of shelterbelts. In these discussions, the team is working closely with ChangeMakers, the Manitoba firm involved in the project's social marketing tools, to develop a communications strategy around shelterbelts.

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For more information on this project, contact:

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This project is implemented by the Upper Assiniboine River Conservation District (as project proponent) in collaboration with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Manitoba Agro Woodlot Program, Manitoba Cattle Producers Association, Manitoba

## CIC cont.

To move the project's activities forward in Manitoba, the RDI research team has already given a presentation on the "Local Immigrant Partnership (LIP)" model to staff of the Westman Immigration Service and other community stakeholder.

Funding was provided by Citizen and Immigration Canada.

For more information on this project, contact:

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## International Comparative Rural Policy Studies Summer Institute in Mexico

RDI's contingent at the 2014 ICRPS Institute hosted by the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Mexico included Bill Ashton, RDI Director, Raymond Thomson, RDI Researcher, and Subinuer Aizimujiang, MRD student.

Take-home lessons from 2014:

**Social innovation** is an emerging idea used to define co-operation among individuals in a community or region. This type of policy response empowers the citizens of rural communities to be social innovators, who are better able to mobilize their community's assets.

**Learning from stakeholders** confirms that governments need to be connected to the producers and the communities in which they live. Having farmers, workers and associations involved in this process helps build stronger policy over the long-term.

**Rural issues are interconnected and complex.** This year's case studies highlighted that the economy, environment and social challenges are often times intertwined which requires a coordinated approach to develop sustainable rural policies with better outcomes.

**Community cohesion binds the rural together.** This year's field trips helped participants appreciate the concept of "Ejidos", meaning the sharing the benefits gained from the common lands in rural areas among the community members. While "Ejidos is uniquely Mexican", rural Manitobans share a similar sense of commitment through their collective efforts to sustain and promote their communities.

Respecting ICRPS's commitment to shared learning, Bill Ashton offered two presentations: "Innovation strategies for rural Manitoba", and "Developing crown forest policy: a public and private affair."

The 2015 ICRPS Summer Institute at the University of

For more information, visit <http://icrps.org/institute>

## Digital Skills for

The first three phases of the project were completed over the summer with the review of a report to be involved in the project designed to align the project with the needs. Two towns were selected because both have a history and represent distinct rural communities. Sessions were held in both towns and invite prospective participants to participate in the third phase of the project. Businesses participated in the sessions. Their involvement was to help members from Wilfong develop the app. Software development, the final research phase, and providing feedback.

Questions about the project's Principal Investigator, Dr. Bowen Hui, University of

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This project is a collaboration of British Columbia and RDI, with funding provided by the Humanities Research

## Certificate in S

RDI continued to work on the Certificate with institutions of Public Sector at Brandon University. The program developed for public sector, NGOs, and associations to help them adapt social media and maintain their stakeholder

On May 6<sup>th</sup> at Brandon University, a panel discussion featured a panel of media projects completed by participants. These projects were presented with the program participants to show practical social media applications. Certificates

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Mary's University. The afternoon features a presentation on rural wealth creations by Dr. Tom Johnson, University of Missouri, along with facilitated discussion about issues facing rural communities.

This event has also been made possible with the support of the Honorable Ron Kostyshyn, Minister of Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

For more information about this event, contact:

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For more information on this project, contact:

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To coincide with RDI's 25th year anniversary, the entire series of Fact Sheets is available for download at: <http://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/25th>

Funding for this project was made available by the MAFRD.



## Citizen & Immigration Canada—Community Consultations

The optimization of delivery of settlement services is essential for new immigrants to feel at home in Canada. This outcome can be realized by individuals and families through their hard work and determination. This picture is not all rosy, however, as any number of variables can impact negatively on this process. Given this reality and the success of its previous immigration projects, RDI was invited by Citizen and Immigration Canada (CIC) to participate in a project focused on inventorying immigration settlement services across CIC's Western Region.

The scale of this project necessitated a team approach with five Co-Principal Investigators planning and executing the research activities – one for each of the four western provinces and a fifth for the three territories. To maximize the breadth of data collection across this region, about 30 communities will be selected based on the proportion of immigrant landings in smaller urban centres and rural communities across the represented provinces and territories. Research activities will be undertaken with the assistance of knowledgeable members of service provider organizations in

the selected commu-  
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validate the findings

Project Objectives

- Inventory the extent of settlement services in selected communities
- Determine the strengths and weaknesses of settlement services in the selected communities
- Examine the “Local Model” used successfully to enhance settlement services in Western Canada.

With an expected completion date of late 2014, the results of this project will deliver:

- A summary of the current settlement services and opportunities in each of the four provinces and the Territories
- A summary of the strengths and weaknesses of settlement services in each province and the Territories
- A Final Project Report and recommendations for settlement services and opportunities in

## Adjustment Strategies for Communities

Through the summer of 2014 RDI completed its project *Integrated Community Adjustment*. This project focused how government agencies and provincial organizations can provide more effective and relevant programs to help rural communities adjust to the challenges of rapid growth.

Insights gained from this study prompted MAFRD and Manitoba Immigration and Multiculturalism to re-engage RDI in a follow-up study to investigate the circumstances of rural communities that are declining in population.

This project, *Adjustment Strategies for Declining Communities*, focuses on identifying key factors that can help change the direction of declining populations in rural communities and support them towards growth.

To accomplish this goal, the project has set a number of key objectives:

- Review Statistics Canada Community Profile data to categorize declining and recently growing rural communities and select 2-3 communities in each group in order to conduct high-level profiles of each,

als, and websites to  
tify key elements,  
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- Conduct a series of focus group interviews, including and recent growth communities, to align a number of key factors with the needs of groups of communities
- Present the research findings to the communities

Funding to conduct this project was provided by MAFRD and Manitoba Immigration and Multiculturalism.

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