

Press Release

Third Edition of the Age-friendly Environments ECHO Programme

TORONTO, 26 August, 2024 – On behalf of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) it is a pleasure to invite new and emerging leaders of age-friendly cities and communities from around the world to participate in an innovative and exciting learning opportunity: the third edition of the Age-friendly Environments (AFE) ECHO Program. The program will provide a safe environment where participants can share knowledge and learn from experts and other learners through collaborative problem-solving, to gain the skills necessary to advocate and drive the age-friendly model within their own city and/or community.

Background

The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) was established in 2010 to connect cities, communities and organizations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow older in. The mission of the Network is to stimulate and enable cities and communities around the world to become increasingly age-friendly.

Through the Network's on-line platform "Age-friendly World", members access tools and resources that can guide and support their age-friendly work and exchange and learn from each other. Network members are also supported by 21 Affiliates that play an essential role in promoting the creation of age-friendly environments and facilitating information exchange and learning between communities.

Given the extensive experience of Network Affiliates and members, there is an opportunity for more experienced leaders to mentor those that are new to this work. Recognizing the invaluable benefits that Mentorship programmes provide, the WHO set up, with support from the International Federation on Ageing (IFA), the Age-friendly Environments Programme to help develop and strengthen skills and competencies of individuals through one-to-one mentor-mentee relationships.

The programme generated a high number of requests which could not be fully met through the mentor-mentee programme. To respond to the demand, WHO and IFA have developed another initiative under this programme: [Age-Friendly Environments \(AFE\) ECHO](#) – a multi-session learning cycle, developed and guided by the needs of mentee applicants and aligned with approaches and guidance from WHO on age-friendly cities and communities.

Program Curriculum Topics

The AFE ECHO is a multi-session learning cycle comprising of 5 one-hour sessions from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. PHST ([click here to see the time in your time zone](#)) taking place bi-weekly over a 2-month period from 15 October to 10 December. Participants are expected to attend all sessions, as the experience and knowledge is cumulative. Additionally, after each session there will be a 15 minute optional Q&A session during which attendees can consult with the expert Hub Team. Members include Dr. Mikiko Kanda from the World Health Organization and Dr. Kathleen Brasher from La Trobe University.

Using Zoom video conferencing, participants are welcome from around the world, with this learning cycle to be held in English. To learn more about the program curriculum please visit the IFA website.

Session 1 | The Age-Friendly Journey: An Introduction | 15 October 2024

Session 2 | Engage and Understand | 29 October 2024

Session 3 | Plan Strategically | 12 November 2024

Session 4 | Act and Implement | 26 November 2024

Session 5 | Monitor and Evaluate Progress | 10 December 2024

All those interested in participating are encouraged to register [here](#).

Media Contact

Please contact Ms. Elizabeth Lewis at elewis@ifa.ngo should you have any questions or would like any additional information about the Age-Friendly Environments ECHO Program.

About the International Federation on Ageing (IFA)

IFA is an international, non-governmental organization (NGO) with a unique membership base comprising government, NGOs, academics, industry, and individuals in over 80 countries. Over the last 45 years, the IFA has become known as a leading and innovative organization that works across disciplines and sectors toward common goals that improve the lives of older people.

Improving rates of vaccination for globally is a priority of IFA, as a key contributor to healthy ageing. The IFA, across almost a decade, and through the [Vaccines4Life](#) program, has worked alongside committed organizations to address barriers to improve adult vaccination rates in the context of healthy ageing.

As a non-State actor at the World Health Organization (WHO) and with general consultative status at the United Nations and its agencies, the IFA is in the position to advocate directly with Member States and contribute to and inform intergovernmental dialogue.