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Brandon University involved in national immigration research project

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Brandon University is partnering with other major Canadian universities in a national research project on immigration. The seven-year study will offer service providers and policy-makers new insight into attracting, settling and integrating newcomers, especially into small and mid-sized communities, BU said this afternoon.

The Director of BU's Rural Development Institute (RDI), Prof. Bill Ashton, is chairing the Prairie node of Pathways to Prosperity: New policy directions and innovative local practices for newcomer integration and attraction, which dovetails with the institute's key strategic directive of rural immigration.

"We know that only a small percentage of newcomers settle in rural Canada, while the vast majority locate to Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver," said Ashton. "Call it the MTV effect. This study will allow us to drill down into the challenges of rural immigration, including language training, housing and a host of other factors which may not be present in big cities."

Prof. Victoria Esses at Western University initiated the \$12.5-million study, which involves dozens of partners: Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, University of Waterloo, University of New Brunswick, Carleton University and York University; the cities of Calgary, Saskatoon, London, Moncton and Ottawa; and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Government of Canada Citizenship and Immigration and Government of Manitoba Labour and Immigration. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) is contributing \$2.5 million through a Partnership Grant.

BU's Acting Vice-President (Academic & Provost), Dean Care is "extremely pleased that Brandon University is joining other Canadian universities as a partner on this important research project. Being a rural-based university, BU is well positioned to make a significant contribution to this project; especially one with such relevance to our local community."

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