

Press Release

16th November 2023

Ageism is Real: It's Time to Act Against Age Bias and Discrimination

According to the [United Nations](#), the global population aged 65 and over is growing faster than all other age groups. In 2018, for the first time in history, persons aged 65 or above outnumbered children under five years of age across the world. By 2050, one in six people in the world will be over age 65, up from one in 11 in 2019. Population ageing is poised to become one of the most significant social transformations of the twenty-first century, with implications for nearly all sectors of society.

Although the number of 50-plus people in employment has doubled since 1996, 68% of the 55-plus feel the jobs market is closed to them and may be forced into early retirement. As many as 82% of organisations haven't considered age as part of their diversity and inclusion strategies, stating it is 'not a business priority' ([CIPD Report](#)). The clock is ticking on ageism and it's high time we took action against age bias and discrimination.

The International Stress Management Association (ISMA^{UK}) is holding a webinar on this highly topical subject, entitled *Understanding and Combatting Ageism*, on Thursday 23rd November. The speaker is Lucy Standing, an expert in the field of mid- and later-life career development, and co-founder of [Brave Starts CIC](#), a non-profit enterprise which helps people as they get older to consider what they want to do next. She will be interviewed by Deep Dhir Raja, a broadcaster and lobbyist.

Ageism contributes to economic inequality, as people in the 50-plus age group are more likely to face reduced employment opportunities, with their skills and experience being under-utilised, in turn impacting on their financial stability. Ageism also contributes to social exclusion, with associated impacts on stress levels, self-esteem and mental and physical health. Age bias and discrimination is linked to earlier death rates. [One study](#) found that older adults who engaged in self-directed ageism and perceived themselves as useless had shorter lifespans than those with positive self-perceptions. Self-directed ageism can also result in poorer health outcomes, including chronic conditions and short-term health issues.

Lucy Standing will look at the size and scale of the problem; stereotypes, prejudices, and forms of discrimination; she will ask what strategies can be used to help people deal with ageism, and what broader actions professionals can undertake to better support those dealing with stress brought about by ageism.

Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA^{UK}, said, “This is truly an issue for our times: the negative effects of ageism on mental as well as physical health can lead to stress, anxiety, and feelings of isolation, contributing to a decline in overall wellbeing. Stereotypes about older people being less innovative or adaptable result in missed opportunities for organisations. We are delighted that Lucy is shining a light on this important subject, so that we can become more age-inclusive and people can lead more fulfilling lives for longer. Please join us online on 23rd November for an insightful discussion.”

Notes for Editors

- **Understanding and Combatting Ageism**
For more information on ISMA^{UK}'s online webinar, being held on Thursday 23rd November, go to <https://isma.org.uk/interactive-webinars>. Places may be booked in advance on <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/understanding-and-combatting-ageism-tickets-755656046577> and are free to ISMA^{UK} members. Non-members are asked to pay £10.
- **Lucy Standing** Lucy is an expert in the field of mid- and later-life career development. She is a co-founder of [Brave Starts CIC](#), a non-profit enterprise which helps people as they get older to consider and figure out what they want to do next. Through Brave Starts, Lucy hopes to build a research and evidence base to ensure that actions taken, whether by individuals or organisations, are carried out based on an understanding of what works. Lucy is a Chartered Psychologist, an Associate Fellow with the British Psychological Society, and Certified Principal Psychologist with the Association for Business Psychology. Previously, she worked as a psychologist in the strategy consulting and investment banking sectors.
- **Deep Dhir Raja** Deep is a broadcaster with Lyca Gold, where he hosts one of London's leading talk shows and acts as a link on behalf of Britain's ethnic communities. His show often features high-profile guests, from Police Commissioners and past Prime Ministers through to community leaders and entertainment personalities. As an intern, Deep gained valuable political experience which led to him becoming a lobbyist for a breast cancer charity. He has also addressed the House of Lords, presented to the NHS and been invited to speak at health conferences.
- **The International Stress Management Association (ISMA^{UK})** is the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing and performance, promoting sound knowledge and best practice in stress management, resilience, wellbeing and mental health for almost 50 years. ISMA^{UK} practitioners and consultants provide stress management services to individuals and businesses, assisting around 40,000 people who need professional help with stress-related issues every year. ISMA^{UK} endorses and uses the HSE guidelines for managing stress in the workplace. To find out more about ISMA^{UK}, visit www.isma.org.uk.
- **Press Interviews**
For all press and media enquiries please contact Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA^{UK}, for an immediate response on +44 (0) 77 688 78910 or at chair@isma.org.uk.