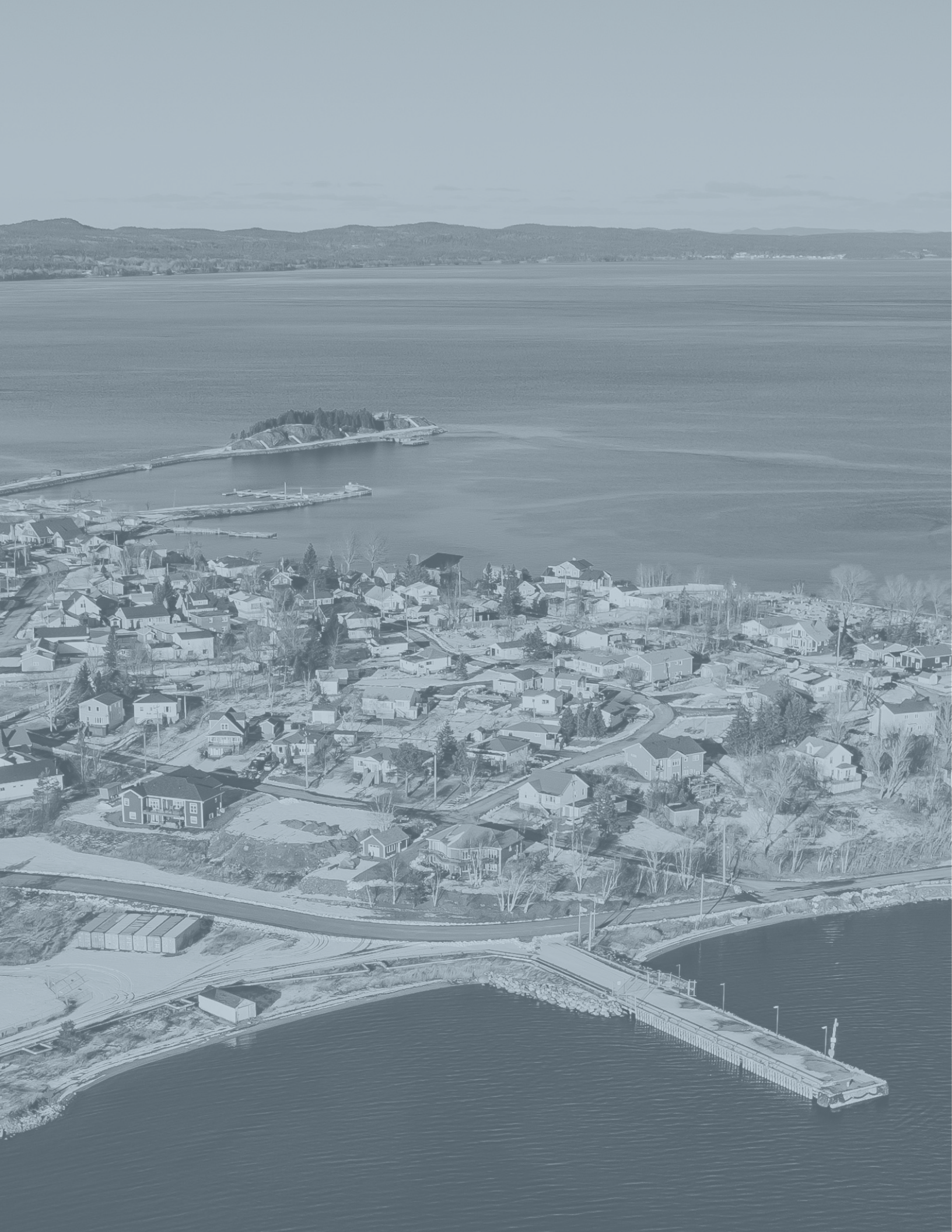


Building Competitive Regional Economies

WORKSHOP PROGRAM





DAY 1: ADVANTAGES, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES—AI FOR SMES

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	REGISTRATION & NETWORKING
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	OPENING REMARKS & WELCOME
9:30 AM – 10:15 AM	<p>SESSION 1: HOW CAN AI DRIVE SME PRODUCTIVITY & COMPETITIVENESS?</p> <p>Keynote</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seamus Blackmore, Chief Technology Officer & Vice President with Trudell Medical
10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	<i>Break</i>
10:30 AM – 11:50 AM	<p>SESSION 2: EXPLORING POTENTIAL</p> <p>Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seamus Blackmore, Chief Technology Officer & Vice President with Trudell Medical • Vince Payne, CEO, OPAS Mobile • Nicole Rathie, Director of Community Relations, AI4Manufacturing Canada • James Lanning, CEO Keen Payroll • Craig March, CEO, Cliffs Edge Retreat <p>Moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Whelan, CEO, Seafair Capital
11:50 AM – 12:15 PM	<p>LUNCH</p> <p><i>Buffet lunch – Room 2007B</i></p>
12:15 PM – 12:50 PM	<p>KEYIN COLLEGE AI TRAINING DEMO</p> <p>Presenters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craig Tucker, Co-Owner, Keyin College • Andrew Mercer, AI Micro-Credentials Instructor, Keyin College

Workshop Agenda May 7-8, 2025

12:50 PM – 1:40 PM	<p>SESSION 3: AI SKILLS & TRAINING – AI TRAINING IN THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY</p> <p>Moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cathy Simpson, CEO, TechImpact, New Brunswick <p>Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline McDonald, Industry Engagement Lead, Keyin College • Mark Gillingham, President, PolyUnity Tech Inc. • Michael Gardiner, Director, Digital Engineering, Americas, Microsoft
1:40 PM – 1:45 PM	<i>Break</i>
1:45 PM – 2:40 PM	<p>SESSION 4: BARRIERS TO AI ADOPTION FOR SMES – UNPACKING & MAPPING</p> <p>Small Group Discussions</p>
2:40 PM – 3:45 PM	<p>SESSION 5: BARRIERS TO OPPORTUNITIES – IDEA SPRINT</p> <p>Small Group Discussions</p>
3:45 PM – 3:55 PM	<i>Break</i>
3:55 PM – 4:50 PM	<p>SESSION 5 (CON'T): OPPORTUNITIES TO ACTION</p> <p>Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Patterson, Executive Director, Magnet • Darryl Genge, President and CEO, Springboard Atlantic • Robert Luke, CEO, E-Campus Ontario • Rhonda Tulk-Lane, CEO, Atlantic Chamber of Commerce • Monique Campbell, Manager, Policy, Research & Information Services, ACOA • Angela Knightvanschaayk, Chair, NECO • Lisa Learning, Board Member, CBDC • Natasha Hudson, Director, Technology Acceleration & Adoption, CME
4:50 PM – 5:00 PM	DAY 1 WRAP-UP

Workshop Agenda May 7-8, 2025

EVENING EVENT

MAGNET NETWORK LIVE: SPOTLIGHT ATLANTIC CANADA

7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Quidi Vidi Village
Artisans Studios

Networking & panel discussion
exploring the intersection of AI,
productivity, small business,
& innovation.

Panel

- **Wendy Cukier**, Academic Director & Founder, Diversity Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Peter Warrian**, Senior Research Fellow, Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto
- **Mark Patterson**, Executive Director, Magnet, Toronto Metropolitan University

Moderator

- **Emily Madden**, Executive Producer, Magnet Network Live

Please note, registration is required for this event: magnetnetworklive.ca/atlantic/#register

DAY 2: POLICY, PLANNING & NEXT STEPS

8:30 AM – 8:45 AM	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & REVIEW
8:45 AM – 9:00 AM	REVIEW & OVERVIEW OF OBJECTIVES
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	<p>SESSION 6: POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR AI ADOPTION FOR SMES</p> <p>Keynote</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marc-Etienne Ouimette: AWS (Amazon Web Services) global lead for AI policy. <p>Panelists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennifer Laplante, Chief Growth & Investment Officer, Ocean Supercluster • Jayson Myers, CEO, Ngen Manufacturing Canada • Rachel Dignam, Director of EU & International Public Affairs at Sage • Yoichi Iida, Assistant Vice Minister for International Affairs at the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs & Communications (MIC) • Lawrence Atkins, AI International-AI Policy Directorate, Department for Science Innovation & Technology (DSIT) • Marco Bianchini, Economist/Coordinator D4SME Global Initiative, OECD

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10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	SESSION 7: DEVELOPING POLICY MEASURES & LEVERS TO SUPPORT SMES Small Group Discussion
11:00 AM – 11:15 AM	<i>Break</i>
11:15 AM – 12:15 PM	SESSION 8: BUILDING A ROADMAP FOR SME AI ADOPTION Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wendy Cukier, Director, Diversity Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University• Tony Bonen, Executive Director, Economic Research, Conference Board of Canada• Emad Rizkalla, CEO, BlueDrop• Florian Villaumé, CEO, TechNL Moderator <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roseanne Leonard, Managing Director, NL Association of Community Business Development Corporations
12:15 PM – 12:30 PM	CLOSING REMARKS



Profiles

Robert Greenwood

Rob Greenwood is Deputy Minister of Rural and Regional Development and Engagement, and Chief Economic Development Officer with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. He is the lead for NL Futures, a whole-of-government initiative focused on labour market strategy, productivity improvement and rural/regional development capacity. Prior to assuming his current role, he served as Associate Vice President (Public Engagement and External Relations) at Memorial University, and was founding Director of the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development. He has also held senior positions with both the provincial governments of Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador, and been instrumental in the establishment of community economic development capacity institutions, as well as the development of sector-based and provincial economic strategies.

Working at the intersection of government, industry, community and academia, Rob has led national and international research projects and published extensively on rural and regional economic development. Rob holds a Ph.D. in Industrial and Business Studies from the University of Warwick, England, which he attended as a Commonwealth Scholar and an Institute of Social and Economic Research Doctoral Fellow.

Seamus Blackmore

Seamus Blackmore is currently the Chief Technology Officer and Vice President of AI at Trudell Medical Group, where he leads the implementation of AI technologies at scale across the organization to drive innovation, operational excellence, and patient-centered solutions. He also is currently a member of EllisDon's AI advisory board.

Previously he served as a Partner at KPMG, where he led a team focused on applying AI to solve real-world challenges. He was a member of the firm's Digital Executive Team and AI Steering Committee, a former member of Microsoft's AI Partners board, and an active volunteer within the Newfoundland community and has always looked for opportunities to use technology to strengthen the Newfoundland Economy. Seamus holds a Bachelor of Computer Engineering from Memorial University of Newfoundland.



Vince Payne

Vince Payne is the CEO and founder of OPAS Mobile, an AI-powered field management software transforming industrial operations by proactively identifying workplace risks. A Civil Engineer by trade and Memorial University graduate, Vince brings 15 years of experience across offshore oil & gas, mining, industrial construction, and technology.

In addition to leading OPAS Mobile, Vince serves on the senior management team at North Star Associates, leveraging his hands-on industry knowledge to drive innovation and operational excellence. He is also an active investor in real estate, technology, and industrial product companies across Canada.

Nicole Rathie

Nicole Rathie is the Director of Community Relations at Canada Makes and AI4Manufacturing Canada, where she is a leader in connecting Canadian manufacturers to technology experts to accelerate the adoption of AI and additive manufacturing technologies.

With a background in marketing, sustainability, and community development, Nicole has successfully built industry partnerships, led international trade missions, and developed initiatives that drive engagement and growth within Canadian manufacturing ecosystems.

James Lanning

James is the CEO of Keen, an innovative fintech and accounting services firm, with over a decade of experience in finance and operations, he specializes in leveraging technology to streamline financial management for businesses. A CPA, he holds a B.Comm from Memorial University and advanced certifications in project management and strategic innovation. Passionate about empowering business owners, James is committed to delivering accurate, timely financial insights that drive growth and efficiency for his clients.

Craig March

Craig March is a Newfoundland native who began his career as an electrician before moving into technology consulting during the Hibernia project. With over 25 years of experience helping businesses across Canada improve through technology, adoption, and process automation, Craig returned home to create Cliffs Edge Retreat—a year-round tourism destination on the southern shore. He has developed a continuous improvement methodology that guides every aspect of his business, from product development and marketing strategy to technology implementation. By integrating AI into this approach, Craig has significantly enhanced efficiency, innovation, and overall productivity across the board.



Anne Whelan

Anne Whelan is an award-winning entrepreneur, an experienced corporate director, and a community champion. As founder and CEO of Seafair Capital, one of Canada's Best Managed Companies, Anne has started and grown a portfolio of companies in healthcare, safety, business services and real estate. Anne has been recognized for her contributions to business and community with multiple honors, including being inducted into the 2023 Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame, and most recently being presented with a King Charles Coronation Medal.

Craig Tucker

Craig Tucker is a seasoned senior executive with expertise in corporate communications, market development, and strategic innovation. As the former Managing Partner of Group M5, Craig spearheaded a transformative period of growth and development for the organization, spanning fifteen years.

An accomplished entrepreneur, Craig currently owns and manages a diverse portfolio of businesses under Crossbeam Education, which includes renowned institutions such as Keyin College, Learning Labs and Crossbeam Properties. His entrepreneurial drive is rooted in creating and nurturing successful ventures that deliver lasting impact.

Andrew Mercer

Facilitator in AI integration and education with Keyin College, and educator for over 30 years, Andrew has been a pioneer in educational technology innovation in both the public and private sectors. His innovative work has been profiled in CNN, Popular Science, the Wall Street Journal, and the Globe and Mail. Since 2004, his teaching has been entirely online through the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation. Andrew has served as an advisor to a range of national and international organizations, including the JUNOs (MusicCounts), Yamaha US, Intel Corp, and multiple school districts across Canada and the United States. He has presented his work at prominent national and international conferences and symposia.



Cathy Simpson

Originally from Newfoundland, Cathy Simpson is a tech executive and ecosystem builder with a career dedicated to growing Atlantic Canada's innovation economy. She is currently CEO of TechImpact, a non-profit accelerating digital transformation and innovation across the region by connecting industry, government, and academia. A co-founder of PropellCT and past Chair of the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation, Cathy has long been a champion for startups and the growth of the region's tech sector. She also founded UP+GO, a social enterprise empowering high school girls through leadership and career-readiness programs. In 2023, she was named one of WXN's Top 100 Most Powerful Women in Canada. Cathy is an Acadia University graduate and member of the Board of Governors. She resides in Rothesay, NB.

Caroline McDonald

Caroline McDonald leads the development and delivery of industry-aligned micro-credential programs at Keyin College, focusing on emerging technologies such as AI and automation. She oversees curriculum design, stakeholder engagement, and implementation to ensure programs meet the practical needs of industry clients.

Previously, Caroline supported early-stage deep-tech startups as Venture Manager at Creative Destruction Lab and advanced community-driven ventures at Shorefast through strategic partnerships and opportunity development. She holds a BSc in Neuroscience and an MBA from Memorial University.

Mark Gillingham

Mark is a family man and a passionate entrepreneur who is driven to improve the world. His professional career spans 20+ years in advanced technology sectors. An accomplished strategic management professional, Mark has expertise in technology commercialization and business management in national and international markets. He joined PolyUnity in 2021 as President of the organization and is responsible for Business Development, Sales, Client Success, and Strategic Partnerships.

Mark is a proud and active member of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) - National Board of Directors, and the Chair of Newfoundland & Labrador's Advanced Manufacturing Cluster (AMC).



Michael Gardiner

Michael Gardiner leads digital engineering initiatives in the Microsoft's Americas Manufacturing and Mobility industry advisory. In his current role, he helps companies enhance their global engineering, research & development, product lifecycle management, production, and service processes.

For over 25 years, he has lead digital transformation and AI projects in the automotive, aerospace, defense, industrial machinery, high tech, consumer goods, chemical, pharmaceutical, resource, and engineering services industries.

Mark Patterson

Mark Patterson leads Magnet's efforts in advancing workforce innovation and building partnerships that drive skills development and inclusive economic growth. As the creator and Executive Director of Magnet, at Toronto Metropolitan University, Mark has shaped its vision to connect talent with opportunities across Canada and globally.

A recognized expert in workforce development and technology integration, he is at the forefront of emerging trends, including how artificial intelligence is reshaping skills development and the future of work. His leadership continues to influence how individuals and organizations adapt to these changes.

Robert Luke

Robert Luke, PhD, is CEO of eCampusOntario, which supports digital-by-design education, collaboration and innovation for Ontario's Indigenous Institutes, universities and colleges. eCampusOntario plays a critical role in advancing digital participation in postsecondary education, helping to grow the economy by connecting Ontario's postsecondary institutions and learners to the future of learning and the future of work. Dr. Luke has over 25 years' experience in the Canadian and Ontario college and university systems, including teaching, carrying out research, and developing academic programs, as well as innovation and business incubation initiatives. Prior to his role at eCampusOntario, Dr. Luke spent 10 years in executive roles at OCAD University and George Brown College. His expertise is in human-centered knowledge media design, working at the intersections of education and information science to produce useful and useable technology to support education, health and innovation systems.



Wendy Cukier

Dr. Wendy Cukier is a professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Ted Rogers School of Management, Academic Director of the Diversity Institute, and Academic Research Director of the Future Skills Centre. She co-authored the bestseller “Innovation Nation: Canadian Leadership from Java to Jurassic Park” and is a leader in disruptive technologies and innovation. Formerly the Vice President of Research and Innovation, and associate Dean of the Ted Rogers School of Management, she is now the Academic Director of TMUs Diversity Institute. She has also received Canada’s Meritorious Service Cross, one of the country’s highest civilian honours.

Peter Warrian

Dr. Peter Warrian is Distinguished Research Fellow, Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto. He is Canada’s leading academic expert on the steel industry. His current research is on the future of mining. He was formerly Research Director of the United Steelworkers of America. From 1992-94 he was Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance and Chief Economist of the Province of Ontario. He currently serves as an economic advisor to the Vatican on the future of work.

Emily Madden

Emily Madden is the Executive Producer, Magnet Network Live. As a senior director at Magnet, Emily drives the execution of Magnet’s strategic vision, working closely with the leadership team to ensure Magnet continues to connect millions across talent, industry, training, and education. Her work integrates communications, strategic insight, and creative direction, fostering meaningful partnerships and driving innovative initiatives. Emily’s leadership plays a key role in advancing Magnet’s mission to shape the future of work through inclusive growth and preparing organizations for a rapidly evolving job market.

Marc-Étienne Ouimette

Marc-Étienne Ouimette is the global lead for AI policy at Amazon Web Services (AWS), with extensive experience advising governments and organizations on R&D, industrial policy, and technology governance. He has held board roles with GPAI, the B7, Tortoise Media, and the World Economic Forum’s Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

A frequent speaker on AI policy, Marc-Étienne has presented at global forums including the Rockefeller Foundation and the Global AI Summit. Prior to AWS, he was Head of Public Policy at Element AI and practiced corporate law at one of Canada’s leading firms.

Jennifer LaPlante

Jennifer LaPlante is the Chief Growth and Investment Officer at Canada's Ocean Supercluster, leading innovation and commercialization in ocean technology. Formerly Executive Director of DeepSense, she advanced AI adoption across Canada's ocean sector. She holds an MBA and an MSc in Computing and Data Analytics, and co-founded Halifax's Women in Machine Learning and Data Science chapter. Jennifer served on the Government of Canada's AI Public Awareness Working Group and was named a 2021 DataIQ Top 100 Influential Person in AI. She sits on several boards, including Propel ICT, was a founding board member of AI4Manufacturing, and served on the Nominating Committee for the Canadian Internet Registration Authority.

Jayson Myers

Jayson Myers is the CEO of Next Generation Manufacturing Canada (NGen), leading Canada's Global Innovation Cluster for Advanced Manufacturing. NGen secures public and private funding to develop world-class manufacturing solutions and strengthen Canada's industrial ecosystem.

An award-winning business economist, Jay was President & CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters from 2007 to 2016 and later served as Chief Policy Advisor to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. A trusted advisor to business and government leaders, he has lectured at Oxford and the University of Warwick and is a member of the Advisory Board of the World Manufacturing Forum.

Rachel Dignam

Rachel is currently the Director of EU and International Public Affairs at Sage, a FTSE 100 tech company supporting millions of SMEs globally with the technology they need to power their economies. In addition to overseeing public affairs in the EU, Rachel helps lead the organization's global sustainability and tech policy.

Prior to Sage, Rachel was at the International Chamber of Commerce where she worked across several policy areas including sustainability, customs, trade facilitation, and tax.



Tony Bonen

Tony Bonen leads the economic research practice at the Conference Board of Canada, bringing expertise in designing and managing complex economic analyses. He previously served as Executive Director at the Labour Market Information Council and led housing and macroeconomic forecasting at the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. His past work spans climate and economic forecasting, U.S. pension research, and geopolitical analysis for the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Tony holds a PhD in Economics from the New School for Social Research, an MA in International Political Economy from the Brussels School of International Studies, and a BA in Economics and Political Science from Carleton University.

Florian Villaumé

Florian Villaumé is an entrepreneurial leader dedicated to creating and growing impact-oriented initiatives. He holds a Bachelor's in Engineering, a Master's in Science, and a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration. Florian is currently the CEO of techNL, where he has led the organization through a 10x growth in its project portfolio, spearheading its two largest initiatives: *Find Your Future In Tech* and the *Co. Innovation Centre*.

Before joining techNL, Florian founded and developed the Memorial Centre for Entrepreneurship, elevating it to an internationally recognized, award-winning university center. His leadership has been recognized twice in *Atlantic Business Magazine's* list of Top 50 CEOs in Atlantic Canada, in both 2020 and 2024.

Roseanne Leonard

Roseanne Leonard serves as the Managing Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Community Business Development Corporations Inc., where she champions entrepreneurship and economic development. Working to support a network of 16 autonomous member corporations, Roseanne works collaboratively to empower communities across the province to build and sustain successful businesses.

A graduate of Memorial University, Roseanne values lifelong learning and holds certifications in Project Management and Change Management. Roseanne's leadership continues to drive positive impacts in communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, helping to create opportunities and strengthen local businesses.

Paul Preston

Paul is an Advisor and Co-Founder of Audyse Technology, a tech start-up in St. John's, and operates his own Executive Advisory Consultancy, focusing on strategy, innovation, and economic development. His clients include private sector firms, provincial governments and not-for-profits. He was recognized in 2020 as Economic Developer of the Year by the Economic Developers Association of NL. He was previously the Chief Innovation and Marketing Officer of Genoa, and CEO of techNL. Along with his talented team and partners, he has worked to develop and grow the province's technology and innovation sector through evidenced based advocacy and directed programs that include Bounce Health Innovation. He was previously the Director of Technology and Innovation at The Conference Board of Canada in Ottawa, the country's largest think tank. He has travelled extensively and has presented on innovation, economic development, and strategy in places such as Israel, Silicon Valley, New York, and Boston, and has been called as an Expert Witness to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. He is active on several Boards, including CMHA-NL, Genome Atlantic, was Chair of the Digital Technology Committee of The Health Accord in NL, and was Co-Chair of the Atlantic Canada ICT Committee (ACOA-ATIGS). He resides in St. John's with his wife and two children, with an active volunteer life.

Cathy Newhook

Cathy Newhook is the Manager of Public Policy and Communications at Memorial University's Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development. With over 20 years of experience in government, non-profit, and post-secondary sectors, she has built a career around connecting people, ideas, and organizations. Working at the intersection of policy, research, and community, Cathy regularly advises on and designs community engagement strategies and consultation frameworks. Along with the Harris Centre team, she facilitates workshops, public events, and stakeholder consultations that unite diverse voices to address complex issues.



