



AI, Remote Work, & Productivity

An International Conference

20
25

May 8-9, 2025

Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL, Canada

Thanks to Our Partners & Collaborators

20
25

AI, Remote Work, & Productivity
An International Conference



Partners:



Social Sciences and
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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR WORK AND ORGANIZATION STUDIES
IAWOS



Rutgers University
School of Management
and Labor Relations

CAREER DEVELOPMENT
INTERNATIONAL



The conference is supported by the Productivity Network as funded by the SSHRC Partnership Grant (McMaster University), SSHRC Connection Grant of Diversity Institute (TMU), SSHRC Partnership Development Grant (Memorial University of Newfoundland), Bridging Divides Research Program funded by the Government of Canada through the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF), Department of Economics at the University of Alberta, Centre for Global Work and Employment, International Association for Work and Organization Studies, Rutgers Networks of Work-Studies Scholars, Stephen Jarislowsky Chair, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Economics, Memorial University, Future Skills Centre and the Journal of Productivity Analysis.

Welcome

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all attendees of the 2025 AI, Remote Work, and Productivity International Conference.

This year's conference holds special significance as we honour a century of Memorial University's commitment to education, research, and community impact. Your presence underscores the transformative power of knowledge-sharing—a tradition we proudly continue.

Memorial University is an established leader in advancing socioeconomic research and public policy. In recent years, it has emerged as a leading institution in innovation in artificial intelligence and remote work. Our scholars are shaping how Canadians live and work in a fast-paced, technology-advancing environment.

St. John's offers the perfect setting for this conference. One of the oldest cities in North America and the easternmost point of the continent, it offers a unique blend of heritage, culture, and technology. From colourful row houses and windswept cliffs to a thriving arts scene and growing tech sector, St. John's represents an interesting mix of tradition and transformation.

Memorial was founded to honor the sacrifices of Newfoundlanders in the First World War and continues to serve the province and the world today by fostering learning, innovation, and inclusion. Today, it offers over 100 degree programs and is home to some of Canada's most impactful research in areas such as migration, social equity, and AI.

As the only university in Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial proudly fulfills its mandate to support the province's development while engaging in global scholarship. We hope that this International Conference will contribute to growth in technology, innovation, equity in work, and the future of our province.

The theme of this year's conference highlights the evolving impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and remote work on productivity. Critical discussions, research presentations, and knowledge-sharing will explore today's pressing global issues related to new technologies that are shaping workplace cultures; how employers can successfully upskill and reskill their workforce to increase productivity; how educational pathways can respond to the needs of diverse employee groups entering the workforce; and how to leverage net-zero and green technologies for innovative and inclusive workplaces.

I would like to thank co-organizer Dr. Wendy Cukier and her team at the Diversity Institution at Toronto Metropolitan University for their strong support, as well as my research team and volunteers for their tireless efforts devoted to the conference.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to all our sponsors who made the Conference possible, including SSHRC Connection Grant of Diversity Institute (TMU), the Bridge Divides Project as funded by the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF), Department of Economics at University of Alberta, Rutgers Center for Global Work and Employment, International Association for Work & Organization Studies, Rutgers

Network of Work-Studies Scholars, Stephen Jarislowsky Chair, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Economics, Memorial University conference fund, Journal of Productivity Analysis and Career Development International.

We hope that you will have a chance to enjoy the work of our fellow researchers and industrial experts in North America and our three keynote addresses by Dr. Rhonda McEwen, Dr. Richard Freeman, and Dr. Jennifer Hunt.

We are delighted to welcome you to this important gathering and we look forward to the ideas, discussions, and partnerships that will result from your attendance.

Welcome to St. John's. Welcome to Memorial University. Welcome to the future of inclusive innovation.

Tony Fang

Professor and Stephen Jarislowsky
Chair in Cultural and Economic Transformation
Memorial University of Newfoundland

<https://www.mun.ca/jchair/>

Welcome Message From Wendy



Tony Fang

Jarislowsky Chair in Cultural and Economic Transformation, Professor at Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Tony Fang has a Ph.D. in Industrial Relations and Human Resources from the University of Toronto. He is the Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Economic and Cultural Transformation at Memorial University of Newfoundland and an adjunct Professor with the University of Toronto (IR/HR) and Toronto Metropolitan University (Sociology). Currently, he holds the J. Robert Beyster Faculty Fellowship at Rutgers University. He served on the World Bank's Expert Advisory Committee on Migration and Development (2014-2019) and as the President of the Chinese Economists Society (2012-13) and as the Domain Leader at CERIS, Ontario Metropolis Centre (2009-12). He was a visiting professor at Harvard University and NBER, The Wharton School, City University of Hong Kong, Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen), Tsinghua University, and Fudan University. In 2017, he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA) 2017. He won the Morley Gunderson Prize in 2025.

Tong Fang's areas of research interest encompass issues of immigration, diversity, and cultural changes, pension, retirement policy, and the aging workforce, minimum wages and youth employment, union impact on wages, innovation, and firm growth, pay equity and employment equity, and has published in such journals as Strategic Management Journal, Industrial and Labor Relations Review (Cornell), Industrial Relations (Berkeley), British Journal of Industrial Relations (LSE), Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations, Journal of World Business, International Journal of Human Resource Management, International Migration, Canadian Journal of Economics, Canadian Public Policy, and China Economic Review.

He was appointed by the Government of Canada as a member of the Expert Consultation on Private Pensions in Canada, and more recently, for the 2021-2023 Review of Employment Equity Act.



Wendy Cukier

Founder and Academic Director (Diversity Institute), Professor of Entrepreneurship, Toronto Metropolitan University

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 TMU's Diversity Institute which has 10 hubs across the country, over 80 research staff, 100 research associates from around the world, and more than 200 industry partners focused on future skills, entrepreneurship and inclusion. Recent projects have included the development of competency frameworks and strategies to support the adoption of AI among entrepreneurs and Small and Medium Enterprises. Wendy has been recognized with many awards for her volunteer work and was named one of the "100 Alumni who shaped the Century" by the University of Toronto. She has also received Canada's Meritorious Service Cross, one of the country's highest civilian honours. She holds a PhD in Information Systems from the Schulich School of Business, an MBA (Marketing and Information Systems), an MA, and honorary doctorates from Laval and Concordia universities.



Ailsa Craig

Acting Associate Vice-president (academic) and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dr. Amy Warren is acting provost and vice-president (academic) at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Amy Warren began her career at Memorial University more than 20 years ago. Dr. Warren is a proud alumnus of Memorial, where she completed her Bachelor of Commerce Co-operative degree, as well as her Master of Employment Relations (MER). Dr. Warren went on to study at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, where she obtained her PhD in Management in 2009. Dr. Warren became a full professor with the Faculty of Business at Memorial in 2024.

Dr. Warren conducts research in the areas of goal setting, retirement, bridge employment and employee mistreatment. She has held two SSHRC research grants at the principal investigator and she is currently a co-investigator on another SSHRC grant.

Dr. Warren was the Director of the MER program for three years and then during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, she became the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) at Memorial. In 2021, she was appointed Interim Associate Vice President Academic (AVPA) and Dean of the SGS. She held that appointment until December 2023, when she was successful in obtaining a formal 5-year appointment as the AVPA and Dean of the SGS.

Dr. Warren is passionate about serving students throughout their academic career at Memorial. She has particular interest in accessibility at Memorial and is the chair of the Accessibility Steering Committee. Dr. Warren has shared her lived experience as a disabled woman in many different venues. She wrote about her lived experience as a disabled woman in the context of work, and this was published as a first person essay in the Globe and Mail. Dr. Warren hopes her lived experience and her work on the Accessibility Steering Committee at Memorial will ultimately benefit students with disabilities who choose Memorial for their undergraduate or graduate degree(s).



Honourable Sarah Stoodley

Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, Acting Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Acting Minister of Housing, and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Sarah Stoodley (MA, B.Comm. Co-op) was first elected to the House of Assembly on May 16, 2019.

Ms. Stoodley grew up in Grand Falls-Windsor, lived and worked for three years in Oxford, United Kingdom, and built a successful career as a digital expert in financial services.

She was an elected alumni representative on the Memorial University Board of Regents and served on the C.A. Pippy Park Commission Board and the techNL (NATI) Board.

On April 8, 2021, she was re-sworn-in as Minister of Digital Government and ServiceNL, Minister Responsible for the Office of the Chief Information Officer and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Since July 19, 2024, Ms. Stoodley has served as the Minister for Immigration, Population Growth and Skills and the Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs. On March 11, 2025 she was also appointed as Acting Minister of Health and Addictions and Acting Minister of Housing.



Meghan Burchell

Acting Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Associate Professor, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Meghan Burchell joined Memorial University in 2013 and is the (acting) Associate Dean of Research in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. She was previously the (acting) Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. As an Associate Professor in Archaeology, Meghan’s research intersects archaeology, biology, and geochemistry to understand long-term human-environmental interactions and climate change through a feminist lens. She is an advocate for graduate student funding and opportunities and focuses much of her time mentoring early career researchers through the process of obtaining research funding and developing engaging opportunities for students.



Roberto Martinez Espineira

Head of Economics Department, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Roberto Martinez Espineira is a Professor and the head of the Department of Economics at Memorial University. Prior to joining MUN, he worked at the Economics Department of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. He earned his undergraduate degree in Economics from the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Later, he completed his MSc in Environmental Economics and DPhil at the Environment Department of the University of York in the UK. One of his primary research areas is the estimation of water demand functions and other issues related to water demand and pricing. Another area of his work focuses on the valuation of natural resources and other non-market goods and services.

AI, Remote Work and Productivity: An International Conference

This timely and interdisciplinary conference will bring together leading scholars, industry experts and policymakers to explore the evolving impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and remote work on productivity.

📍 Memorial University of Newfoundland

📅 May 8 - 9, 2025

	<p>The AI, Remote Work and Productivity: An International Conference is fast approaching. Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Diversity Institute look forward to welcoming everyone. Please find below details about the conference which may be helpful.</p>
Conference Date	May 8 - 9, 2025
Conference Location and Time	<p>May 8, 12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m</p> <p>Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL, Canada - Emera Innovation Exchange Conference Centre, Main Conference Hall, Signal Hill Campus, 100 Signal Hill Rd</p> <p>May 8, 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Dinner (more details to come)</p> <p>May 9, 8:40 a.m. to 10:30 a.m</p> <p>Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL, Canada - St. John's Campus, 232 Elizabeth Ave., Science Building Room SN 2109</p> <p>May 9, 10:45 a.m to 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL, Canada - St. John's Campus, 9 Irwins Rd. R. Gushue Dining Hall, Room DH 2002</p>

Conference Description

This timely and interdisciplinary conference will bring together leading scholars, industry experts and policymakers to explore the evolving impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and remote work on productivity. Critical discussions, research presentations, and knowledge-sharing will explore today's pressing global issues related to new technologies that are shaping workplace cultures; how employers can successfully upskill and reskill their workforce to increase productivity; how educational pathways can respond to the needs of diverse employee groups entering the workforce; and how to leverage net-zero and green technologies for innovative and inclusive workplaces.

Where to stay

Sheraton Hotel Newfoundland.115 Cavendish Square, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada A1C. There is a conference rate of \$169 plus taxes. Any guests interested in booking a stay should email reservations@sheratonhotelnewfoundland.com and mention that they are part of the [AI Productivity Network Room Block May 2025](#) along with their requested dates.

May 8, 2025

1/2 day

Time

Registration

12:30-1:00 pm

Welcome

1:00-1:10pm

Opening Remarks

1:10-1:30pm

Keynote

1:30-2:30pm

Confirmed Speakers

Location

Signal Hill Campus
Emera Innovation Exchange
Conference Centre

Tony Fang

Jarislowsky Chair in Cultural and Economic Transformation, Professor of Economics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Wendy Cukier

Founder and Academic Director (Diversity Institute), Professor of Entrepreneurship, Toronto Metropolitan University

Amy Warren

Acting Provost and Vice President (Academic), Memorial University of Newfoundland

Honourable Sarah Stoodley

Minister of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills, Acting Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Acting Minister of Housing, and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Meghan Burchell

Acting Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Associate Professor, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Rhonda McEwen

President and Vice-Chancellor of Victoria University, University of Toronto
“AI - Opportunities, Ethics, and Public Sentiments on Safety”

Health Break

2:30-2:40 pm

Panel 1

Artificial Intelligence and
(Other) Innovations in
Technology
2:40-3:40 pm

Chair:
Emily Madden
Senior Director, Magnet

- Ebrahim Bagheri**
Professor, Faculty of Information, UofT (virtual)
- Christian Blouin**
Associate Dean with the Faculty of Computer Science, Dalhousie University
- Wendy Cukier**
Founder and Academic Director Diversity Institute, Professor of
Entrepreneurship, Toronto Metropolitan University
- Marc-Etienne Ouimette**
Global Lead, AI Policy, Amazon Web Services

Panel 2

Technology Trends in
GreenTech and Sustainability
3:40-4:40 pm

- Chair:
- Wendy Cukier**
Founder and Academic Director Diversity Institute, Professor of
Entrepreneurship, Toronto Metropolitan University
- Jeanette Jackson**
CEO, Foresight Cleantech Accelerator Centre (virtual)
- David Sawyer**
Principal Economist at Canadian Climate Institute; Advisor, EnviroEconomics Inc.
- Sam Hampton**
Oxford (Virtual)
- Alison Joutsi**
Director, Sustainability Strategy & Transformation, PWC LLP

Session 1

AI: Labour Market Outcomes
and Future World of Work
4:40-6:00 pm

- Chair:
Rob Greenwood
Deputy Minister of Rural and Regional Development and Engagement,
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Commentator:
David Freshwater
Professor at University of Kentucky

- Wulong Gu**
Senior Advisor in the Economic Analysis Division at Statistics Canada
“AI, Innovation, and Productivity Growth in Canada”
- Mingwei Liu**
Professor and Associate Dean for Research at the School of Management
and Labor Relations, Rutgers University
“Automation, Occupational Structure, and Productivity: Evidence from
Korean Workplace Panel Survey”
- Carl Lin**
Associate Professor of Economics and Director of China Institute, Bucknell
University
“AI and Labor Market Outcomes: Evidence from China”

End of Day 1

6:00 pm

May 9, 2025

2/2 day

Time	Confirmed Speakers	Location
Reception & Continental Breakfast		St. John's Campus, 232 Elizabeth Ave., Science Building Room EN 2109
8:40 - 9:00 am		
Opening Remarks		
9:00-9:05 am	Roberto Martinez Espineir Head of Economics Department, Memorial University	
Keynote		
9:05-10:35 am	Richard Freeman Herbert Ascherman Chair in Economics, Harvard University "Me and My AI, Working Remote: Boosting Productivity/Job Satisfaction or Inciting Labor-Management Conflict?" Jennifer Hunt Professor of Economics, Rutgers University "AI-ming for faster Canadian productivity growth: is it possible and should workers care?"	
Health Break & Change Venue	Change venue to: 9 Irwins Rd. R. Gushue Dining Hall, Room DH 2002, St. John's Campus, MUN	
10:35-10:50 am		

New Location

St. John’s Campus,
9 Irwins Rd. R. Gushue Dining Hall, Room DH 2002

Panel 3

Industry Perspectives:
Key Debates Around New
Technologies
10:50 -11:50 pm

Chair:
Alex Stephens
Associate Director, Research & Evaluation, Future Skills Centre

Namir Anani
President and CEO, Information and Communications Technology Council

Elysa Darling
Chief of Staff, Digital Supercluster

Mark Patterson
CEO, Magnet

Rushmi Hasham
Director, Development and Accelerated Cybersecurity Training Programs,
Rogers Cybersecurity Catalyst

Session 2

Big Data, AI, and Labour
Productivity
11:50 am -12:50 pm

Chair:
Benoit Dostie
Professeur, HEC Montréal, Directeur académique, CIQSS

Andrew Sharpe
Founder and Executive Director, Centre for the Study of Living Standards (CSLS)
“Can Canada Return to Trend Labour Productivity Growth of 1 Per Cent?”

Arthur Sweetman
Professor of Economics, McMaster University
“Big Data and Long-term Care: Describing a New Platform in Ontario”

Jocelyn Maclure
Stephen A. Jarislowsky Chair in Human Nature and Technology and Professor of Philosophy, McGill University
“Why is AI not Revolutionizing Work? The Epistemology and Ethics of Deep Artificial Neural Networks”

Lunch

12:50-1:30 pm

Special Issue
Announcement

1:30 - 1:45 pm

Session 3

Remote Work and Employee
Well-being
1:45 - 2:45 pm

Christopher Frank Parmeter
Vice Editor, Journal of Productivity Analysis, and Associate Professor,
University of Miami, School of Business

Tony Fang
Guest editor, Career Development International, Jarislowsky Chair, Memorial
University of Newfoundland

Chair:
Christian Blouin
Associate Dean with the Faculty of Computer Science, Dalhousie University

Anindya Sen
Professor of Economics (University of Waterloo) and Acting Executive
Director, Waterloo Cybersecurity and Privacy Institute (CPI)
“Understanding Differences in Telework, Leisure, and Well Being Over Time:
Evidence from the 2015 and 2022 Statistics Canada Time Use Surveys”

Derek Messacar
Associate Professor of Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland
“Telework and Firm Productivity: Evidence from Canada”

Yanhong Jin
Professor in the Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics
at Rutgers University
“Remote Work and Productivity in the United States”

Session 4

Remote Work:
Determinants and
Organizational Performance
2:45-3:45 pm

- Chair:**
Derek Messacar
Associate Professor of Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Benoit Dostie**
Professor, Department of Applied Economics, HEC Montréal and Academic director of the Quebec inter-University Centre for Social Statistics
“Telework and Productivity: Evidence from a Survey of Quebec Government Employees”
- Xingfei Liu**
Associate Professor of Economics, University of Alberta
“Earnings Assimilation of Immigrants in Canada: 1971 – 2021”
- Emin Gahramanov**
Professor of Economics, School of Business Administration American University of Sharjah (virtual)
“Optimal Level of Remote Work and Employee Wages: Evidence from a Representative Canadian Labour Force Survey”
- Graham King**
Researcher at Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Economic and Cultural Transformation at the Memorial University of Newfoundland
“Determinants and Effects of Remote Work Arrangements: Evidence from an Employer Survey”

Panel 4

Leading Canada’s Economic
Growth: Best practices for
employers on Immigration,
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
(DI covers this)
3:45-4:45 pm

- Tony Fang**
Jarislowsky Chair in Cultural and Economic Transformation, Professor of Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Emile Tompa**
Associate Professor of Economics (McMaster University), Assistant Professor of Public Health at the Dalla Lana School (University of Toronto), and Senior Scientist (Institute for Work and Health)
- Jo-Ann Johnson**
PhD candidate in the School of Industrial Relations at Université Montréal, University of Montreal
- Shannon Pestun**
CEO of Pestun Consulting; Co-founder, The Finance Cafe (Virtual)

Closing Remarks

4:45 - 5:00 pm

- Tony Fang**
Jarislowsky Chair in Cultural and Economic Transformation, Professor of Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Wendy Cukier**
Founder and Academic Director, Diversity Institute, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Toronto Metropolitan University

End of Conference

5:00 pm



Rhonda McEwen

President and Vice-chancellor of Victoria University, University of Toronto

Dr. Rhonda N. McEwen is the 14th President and Vice-Chancellor of Victoria University in the University of Toronto; Canada Research Chair in Tactile Interfaces, Communication and Cognition, a Professor of Emerging Media & Communication, and a faculty member at the Institute of Communication, Culture, Information & Technology.

With an MBA in IT, an MSc in Telecommunications, and a Ph.D. in Information, Dr. McEwen combines communication studies and applied and behavioural sciences to examine the social and cognitive effects of technologies. Her pioneering approach to communication research employs experimental techniques, eye tracking, observations, sensor data, and interviews to investigate Human-Machine Communication. Dr. McEwen has worked with and researched digital communications media for over 20 years, both in companies providing services, and in management consulting to those companies.



Richard Freeman

Herbert Ascherman Chair in Economics, Harvard University

Richard B. Freeman holds the Herbert Ascherman Chair in Economics at Harvard University. He is a research associate at the NBER and is currently serving as Faculty co-director of the Center for Labor and a Just Economy at the Harvard Law School.

Professor Freeman received the Mincer Lifetime Achievement Prize from the Society of Labor Economics in 2006. In 2007 he was awarded the IZA Prize in Labor Economics. In 2011 he was appointed Frances Perkins Fellow of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. In 2016 he received the Global Equity Organization (GEO) Judges Award and named a Distinguished Fellow of the American Economic Association as “an enormously innovative labor economist who has made pioneering contributions to virtually every aspect of the field.”

Professor Freeman’s research interests include the job market for scientists and engineers; the transformation of scientific ideas into innovations, Chinese and Korean labour markets; the effects of AI and robots on the job market; and forms of labour market representation and employee ownership.



Jennifer Hunt

Professor of Economics, Rutgers University

Jennifer Hunt is a Professor of Economics at Rutgers University. From 2013–2015, while on leave from Rutgers, she served first as Chief Economist of the U.S. Department of Labor, then as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Microeconomic Analysis at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Prior to joining Rutgers in 2011, she held positions at McGill University, the University of Montreal and Yale University. Hunt is a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts and a Research Fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research in London. Her current research focuses on the geographic diffusion of technology adoption, while past research has also encompassed immigration, wage inequality, unemployment, the science and engineering workforce, the transition from communism, crime and corruption. She received her Ph.D. in Economics from Harvard and her Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Emily Madden

Senior Director, Magnet

Emily Madden 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.



Ebrahim Bagheri

Faculty of Information, University of Toronto

Dr. Ebrahim Bagheri, a Professor at the University of Toronto, is an interdisciplinary researcher who focuses on efficient and responsible information retrieval methods, and who has impacted industry, government and civil society through community engagement and knowledge translation. Before joining the Faculty of Information, Ebrahim held a Canada Research Chair in Social Information Retrieval and an NSERC Industrial Research Chair in Social Media Analytics at Toronto Metropolitan University.

He also founded and directed the NSERC CREATE initiative on responsible AI that uniquely highlighted the need to balance economic development with social good.

He is the Associate Editor for IEEE Transactions on Network Science and Engineering and ACM Transactions on Intelligent Systems and Technology.

In 2019, Ebrahim received the Government of Canada NSERC Synergy Award for Innovation for his outstanding industry-academia collaborations.



Christian Blouin

Associate Dean with the Faculty of Computer Science, Dalhousie University

Christian Blouin is acting Dean and Associate Dean (Academic) for the Faculty of Computer Science, Dalhousie University. He serves also as Institutional Lead (AI strategy) for Dalhousie. Within these roles, he is leading curriculum renewal in Computer Science and coordinating Digital Transformation and AI integration for Dalhousie’s academic mission and administrative functions.



Marc-Etienne Ouimette

Global Lead, AI Policy, Amazon Web Services

Marc-Etienne Ouimette leads global AI policy at AWS. Marc is a published author on R&D, industrial policy, and technology governance, with extensive experience advising organizations and governments. He serves on the B7 advisory committee and on the Partnership for AI Policy Advisory Board, and previously chaired the Montreal Centre of expertise for GPAI, sat on the WEF’s Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution board, and on the advisory board of Tortoise Media. He’s delivered keynotes at prestigious forums including the Rockefeller Foundation, SXSW, the Global AI Summit, the B7 summit, and InterAmerican Development Bank Governor’s meeting. Before AWS, Marc headed Public Policy at Element AI and practiced as a corporate lawyer at a major Canadian firm.



Jeanette Jackson

CEO, Foresight Cleantech Accelerator Centre

Jeanette is an experienced CEO and entrepreneur with broad expertise in strategy, innovation, business development, marketing, and operations. As CEO of Foresight since 2018, she has transformed the non-profit from a regional startup organization to Canada’s largest cleantech accelerator. With her expertise, Foresight has built a vibrant Industry Innovation Program and launched a sectoral approach to accelerate cleantech innovation and adoption.

Prior to joining Foresight, Jeanette was founding CEO of Light-Based Technologies, which she built into a scaling enterprise with venture capital support. In her subsequent role as President of The Brag Company, she oversaw the complete restructuring of the business and sale of the company in just two years.

Jeanette served as an Executive in Residence with Foresight for four years before becoming CEO, where she advised more than 25 ventures in several markets including bio-energy, electric vehicles, smart buildings, water tech, robotics, and wind.

Jeanette is deeply invested in the Canadian cleantech community and has established herself as a passionate advocate for sustainability, championing the importance and impact of Canadian clean technologies in the global transition to net zero. She is a frequent speaker, media guest, and advisor to innovators, industry, investors and government, and has won numerous awards, including:

- 2023 YWCA Women of Distinction Award (Environmental Sustainability)
- 2023 Business in Vancouver Influential Women of Distinction Award
- 2020 Women of Inspiration Advocate and Catalyst for Change Award



David Sawyer

Principal Economist at Canadian Climate Institute; Advisor, EnviroEconomics Inc.

Dave Sawyer is Environmental Economist with over 25 years of national and international experience. Dave has built a solid reputation as a leader in the economics of climate policy and energy futures in Canada. His advice is routinely sought by a wide cross-section of climate policy leaders around the world, bridging political realities with sound economic theory.

For over 20 years, Dave has provided insight on the impact of carbon policy. He was the lead author of a number of seminal Canadian reports on national carbon policy ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) and has published on competitiveness impacts ([here](#) and [here](#)). Dave has also been working in developing countries on the socio-benefits of low carbon development ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)).

Throughout this time, Dave has been working with a small group of energy and macroeconomic modellers to identify the key elements of low carbon pathways for Canada. Recent work on deep decarbonization pathways for Canada figured prominently in the Government of Canada’s Mid-Century Long-Term GHG Development Strategy and formed the basis of the policy package developed for Alberta’s Climate Leadership Plan.

Dave now co-leads Decarbonization Pathways Canada with Dr. Chris Bataille.



Sam Hampton

Oxford University

Sam Hampton is a Senior Researcher in the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford and Research Fellow at the University of Bath. His research focuses on (1) public and business engagement for climate change, including the adoption of low carbon behaviours, lifestyles, and business practices; and (2) policy and governance for net-zero. Sam has conducted extensive research on the role of SMEs in the energy transition, and has published in journals such as Joule, One Earth, PLOS Climate and Energy Research & Social Science, and has worked closely with policymakers in local and national government.



Alison Joutsi

Director, Sustainability Strategy & Transformation, PWC LLP

Alison Joutsi is a sustainability professional with significant experience building ESG programs and managing sustainability risks and opportunities for corporate clients. Her diverse background in law, business and communication allows her to build ESG strategies that integrate with existing corporate goals and priorities generating long-term return on investment. She is regularly called upon to present to Boards and speak at various conferences on Sustainability regulation, disclosure, climate risk and is a frequent guest lecturer to students on Sustainability strategy and reporting.



Rob Greenwood

Deputy Minister of Rural and Regional Development and Engagement,
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Rob Greenwood assumed the role of Deputy Minister, Rural and Regional Development and Engagement, and Chief Economic Development Officer, for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on September 5, 2023. Prior to that, he served as Associate Vice President(Public Engagement and External Relations) at Memorial University and was the founding Director of the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development. His responsibilities also included the Signal Hill Campus, Alumni Engagement, Strategic External Relations, the Botanical Gardens, and the Newfoundland Quarterly.

Before working at Memorial, Rob served as a Director and Assistant Deputy Minister of Policy in Economic Development departments in Newfoundland and Labrador and in Saskatchewan. In Saskatchewan, he led the development of the provincial economic strategy. He was Vice President of Corporate Development, Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan and was the founding Director of the Sustainable Communities Initiative, a partnership of the University of Regina, the City of Regina, and the National Research Council of Canada.



David Freshwater

Professor at University of Kentucky

David Freshwater is professor emeritus at the University of Kentucky. When he retired he was the H.W. Price Professor of Agricultural Policy in the Department of Agricultural Economics and held additional appointments in the Martin School of Public Policy at the University of Kentucky, and the Department of Geography at Memorial University.

David’s main areas of expertise are Agricultural Policy and Economic Development Policy in Rural Regions. He has been a consultant on these topics with the OECD since 1993 and was Head of the Unit for the Rural Programme in 2009. He also served as a member of the professional staff of the United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Nutrition, and as a senior economist for the Congressional Joint Economic Committee. From 1996 to 2001 he managed TVA Rural Studies, a large rural research programme jointly sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority and the University of Kentucky. In addition, he has worked with number of Canadian federal and provincial government departments on agricultural and rural policy issues.



Wulong Gu

Senior Advisor in the Economic Analysis Division at Statistics Canada

Wulong Gu is Acting Director of the Economic Analysis Division at Statistics Canada. His main research is on productivity, innovation, and competition. He has published numerous articles in economics journals, monographs and handbooks. He received his Ph.D. in Economics from McMaster University.



Mingwei Liu

Professor and Associate Dean for Research at the School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

Mingwei Liu is a Professor and Associate Dean for Research at the School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University, and the Founding-Director of the Center for Global Work and Employment. His research interests include comparative employment relations and human resource management, high performance work system, labor standards in global value chains, and technology and work.

His publications appear in journals such as ILR Review, British Journal of Industrial Relations, Human Resource Management, Journal of Business Ethics, China Economic Review, and Comparative Labor Law and Policy Journal. He has also co-edited two books: China at Work: A Labor Process Perspective on the Transformation of Work and Employment in China, and The Role of Leadership in Human Resource Management: Perspectives and Evidence from China.



Carl Lin

Associate Professor of Economics and Director of China Institute, Bucknell University

Carl Lin is the Director (incoming) of the China Institute at Bucknell University—a liberal arts college in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania—and a tenured Associate Professor in the Department of Economics. He is also a Research Fellow at the IZA – Institute of Labor Economics in Bonn, Germany, and at the China Institute for Income Distribution in Beijing, China. Prior to joining Bucknell, he taught at Beijing Normal University. His research focuses on labor and development economics, with particular emphasis on minimum wages, inequality, and rural–urban migration in China.



Alex Stephens

Associate Director, Research & Evaluation, Future Skills Centre

Since 2001, Alex has led research, knowledge mobilization and innovation programs on skills and labour market development, post-secondary education and training, and tripartite approaches to workforce development. He has worked both in Canada and internationally and highlights of his career include leading the Canadian Council on Learning's Work and Learning Knowledge Centre (2006–2009) and the Centre for Workplace Skills (2009–2012). Most of his international work was done with Colleges and Institutes Canada (2013–2020) where he led a capacity building project in Mozambique (2013 to 2015) and managed monitoring and evaluation for all CICan international programs. He joined the Future Skills Centre in 2022 where he is currently acting Director of Programs.



Namir Anani

President and CEO, Information and Communications Technology Council

Namir Anani is the President and CEO of the Information and Communications Technology Council (ictc-ctic.ca). He is the chief strategist and driving force in bringing ICTC’s world-class centre of expertise and services to industry, education and government, shaping Canada’s digital advantage in a global economy.

Before joining ICTC, Namir previously led Policy Development & Research at the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Namir has held several executive leadership roles in both the private and public sectors including the Department of Canadian Heritage (Director General & CEO), CGI consulting, Nortel, and Novartis (Switzerland). Mr. Anani’s experience extends to strategic policy development and implementation, learning and capacity building, business transformation, national/international strategic alliances, economic and market research, and technology innovation.

He has also held numerous board positions and is a frequent keynote speaker at national and international conferences on the digital economy. Namir holds a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Electrical Engineering from the University of Salford (UK) and a Professional Engineer designation in Ontario (P. Eng.).



Elysa Darling

Chief of Staff, Digital Supercluster

Elysa Darling is Chief of Staff at Digital. Elysa’s expertise in communications, government relations and background in law has earned a reputation for building deep relationships and tenaciously executing organizations’ strategic goals. She previously held the roles of Director of Communications and Director of Government & Public Affairs at DIGITAL, where she led the successful effort to obtain a \$750M re-investment in the Global Innovation Clusters Program from the Government of Canada in Budget 2022.

Elysa is also a trained lawyer who practiced in the First Nations corporate commercial group at a large regional firm. In addition, she co-created and taught the Indigenous Business Law course at the University of Calgary Faculty of Law, which focused on the application of corporate commercial law to on-reserve businesses.



Mark Patterson

CEO, Magnet

Mark Patterson leads Magnet’s efforts in advancing workforce innovation and building partnerships that drive skills development and inclusive economic growth. As the creator of Magnet, Mark has shaped its vision to connect talent with opportunities across Canada and globally. A recognized expert in workforce 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.



Rushmi Hasham

Director, Development and Accelerated Cybersecurity Training Programs,
Rogers Cybersecurity Catalyst

Rushmi Hasham Dua is a seasoned leader in cybersecurity and strategic partnerships, serving as the Director of Strategic Partnerships at Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst, at Toronto Metropolitan University. With over 25 years of expertise in disrupting the tech-education and digital-talent sectors, she has forged new markets for national cybersecurity capacity development and led initiatives that have positive impact across the industry. Her work is characterized by a unique blend of continuously engaging industry insight, employer-led solutions, and a commitment to innovation—driving the development of rapid cybersecurity skills and training programs.

Rushmi creates pathways that have rapidly reskilled and upskilled over 1,000 cyber professionals, with many being women and girls, empowering them with the skills and confidence needed to excel in a career in cybersecurity. She loves to share stories of the mid-career career changers like Monica, who pivoted from a career in a high pressure restaurant as a chef to a successful career in cybersecurity. Impacts like Monica’s continue to inspire Rushmi’s work in rapid workforce development.

Frequently sought after as a leader at national events and as a member of key advisory boards, Rushmi’s strategic, action-driven approach and measurable outcomes continue to shape the future of cybersecurity talent in Canada and internationally.



Andrew Sharpe

Founder and Executive Director, Centre for the Study of Living Standards (CSLS)

Andrew Sharpe is founder and Executive Director of the Ottawa-based Centre for the Study of Living Standards (CSLS). Established in 1995, CSLS is a national, independent, non-profit research organization whose main objective is to study trends and determinants of productivity, living standards and economic well-being. He has held a variety of earlier positions, including Head of Research at the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre and Chief, Business Sector Analysis at the Department of Finance. He holds a M.A. and Ph.D in economics from McGill University, a maitrise in urban geography from the Université de Paris-Sorbonne, and a B.A. from the University of Toronto. He is also founder and Editor of the International Productivity Monitor, co-developer (with Lars Osberg) of the composite Index of Economic Well-being. From 2005 to 2024, he served as Executive Director of the International Association for Research on Income and Wealth, an international research association dedicated to the advancement of knowledge relating to income and wealth.



Arthur Sweetman

Professor of Economics, McMaster University

Arthur Sweetman is a Professor in the Department of Economics at McMaster University where he holds the Ontario Research Chair in Health Human Resources. He is also the Director of the Health Policy PhD program located in the Faculty of Health Sciences, and is co-director of McMaster’s Center for Health Economics and Policy Analysis (CHEPA). His research is primarily quantitative with a focus on health economics, social policy, and labour markets.



Jocelyn Maclure

Stephen A. Jarislowsky Chair in Human Nature and Technology and Professor of Philosophy, McGill University

Jocelyn Maclure, FRSC, is Full Professor of philosophy and Jarislowsky Chair in Human Nature and Technology at McGill University. His recent work in the philosophy of AI appeared in journals such as *Minds & Machines*, *AI & Society*, *AI & Ethics*, and *Digital Society*. He was the president of the Ethics of Science and Technology Commission of the Quebec Government from 2017 to 2024.



Christopher Frank Parmeter

Vice Editor, *Journal of Productivity Analysis*, and Associate Professor, University of Miami, School of Business

Christopher F Parmeter is Associate Professor in Economics at the Miami Herbert Business School. He presently serves as Vice Editor of *Journal of Productivity Analysis*, as well as being Coeditor at *Environmental and Resource Economics*. His work has been published in journals such as *Journal of Economic Growth*, *The Economic Journal*, *Journal of Econometrics*, *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, *European Journal of Operational Research*, *Political Analysis*, among others.



Anindya Sen

Professor of Economics, University of Waterloo, and Acting Executive Director, Waterloo Cybersecurity and Privacy Institute (CPI)

Anindya Sen is Professor of Economics at the University of Waterloo where he has taught since 1999, and has been the Director of the Master of Public Service, Founding Director of the Graduate Diploma in Computational Data Analytics for the Social Sciences & Humanities (CDASH), and the Acting Executive Director of the Cybersecurity & Privacy Institute. In 2014 he was recognized for his innovations in teaching and mentoring of students with the University Award for Distinguished Teaching.

He has published research on the relationship between higher cigarette taxes and smoking, the impacts of market power on prices charged to consumers and firm level productivity and innovation, and the effects of higher minimum wages on employment and poverty. His current work has focused on: using advanced Machine Learning models in the analysis of non-pharmaceutical interventions and vaccinations on the spread of COVID-19 and identifying best Emergency Room protocols to reduce readmissions from cardiac arrests; constructing welfare tests for socially efficient data sharing; the economics of data markets and privacy; studying human-computer interaction in the context of cybercrimes; and understanding societal trends in trust, and misinformation.

His research has been published in peer reviewed journals such as the *Review of Income and Wealth*, *Canadian Journal of Economics*, *Journal of Law and Economics*, *Journal of Health Economics*, *Health Economics*, *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *Journal of Regulatory Economics*, *International Review of Law and Economics*, *Labour Economics*, and *Canadian Public Policy*, and has been extensively covered by *The Globe and Mail*, *The Financial Post*, *CBC*, and *The Toronto Star*.



Derek Messacar

Associate Professor of Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dr. Derek Messacar is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at Memorial University. In addition, he holds appointments as a Senior Research Analyst at Statistics Canada, Research Fellow of the Retirement and Savings Institute at HEC Montréal and Board Member of the Atlantic Canada Economics Association and Canadian Labour Economics Forum.

Dr. Messacar is an applied micro-economist with specializations in labour economics, public finance and education economics. He has written on numerous topics including gender inequality, returns to schooling, pensions, retirement, and the COVID-19 pandemic. His research has been published in national and international journals such as Review of Economics and Statistics, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, National Tax Journal, Canadian Journal of Economics, and Canadian Public Policy.

Dr. Messacar received his B.A. from Brock University, M.A. from the University of British Columbia, and Ph.D. from the University of Toronto.



Yanhong Jin

Professor in the Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics at Rutgers University

Yanhong Jin received her Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the UC Berkeley. She is a professor in the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics at Rutgers University, as well as a graduate faculty in the Department of Economics and an affiliated faculty at the Center for Global Work and Employment. Her research focuses on applied microeconomics in agriculture, food, and health, with a significant emphasis on technology adoption. Her work examines R&D investment and the adoption of GMOs, industrial robots, and AI. She has published in leading field journals, including American Journal of Agricultural Economics, American Journal of Health Economics, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, and China Economic Review. She is an associated editor for Agricultural Economics.



Benoit Dostie

Professor, HEC Montréal, Directeur académique, CIQSS

Benoit Dostie is a full professor at the Department of applied economics of HEC Montréal, the business school affiliated with l'Université de Montréal. He is also the academic director of the Québec inter-University Centre for Social Statistics (QICSS), member of the board of the Canadian Research Data Center Network (CRDCN) and member of the Canadian Statistical Advisory Council (CSAC). He is a Fellow at the Institute for the study of labor (IZA) in Germany and at CIRANO.

He received his Ph.D. in economics from Cornell University in 2001, and his research interests include statistical models for linked employer-employee data, returns to human capital, firm-sponsored training, productivity, turnover, and labour reallocation. His work has appeared in numerous scientific journals like the Canadian Journal of Economics, Journal of Econometrics, ILR Review, Industrial Relations, Journal of Human Capital, Journal of Human Resources, and the Journal of Business and Economic Statistics.



Xingfei Liu

Associate Professor of Economics, University of Alberta

Xingfei Liu is a labour economist in the Department of Economics at the University of Alberta. He is a research fellow at IZA (Institute of Labor Economics) and GLO (Global Labor Organization). His research guides public policy by estimating the effects of interventions in labour markets. He is interested in policies that might increase female labour force participation and reduce gender wage gaps but has a general interest in any policy that improves labour market outcomes for any disadvantaged group. I also study the effect of labour market institutions on economic efficiency, especially in China. A third research stream investigates the economic assimilation of immigrants in the U.S. and in Canada. He is also interested in human capital accumulation and its dynamics with other labor market outcomes.



Emin Gahramanov

Professor of Economics, School of Business Administration, American University of Sharjah

Dr. Emin Gahramanov is a Professor of Economics at the American University of Sharjah (AUS), where he has been teaching since 2014. Prior to that, he held a position at Deakin University in Melbourne starting in 2008, after earning his PhD in Economics from Colorado State University. He rose to the rank of Senior Lecturer during his time at Deakin. His current research covers a range of topics, including intergenerational transfers, intertemporal optimization, rationality, economic growth, and taxation. He has published in leading journals such as the International Economic Review, Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control, Economica, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, and Oxford Economic Papers.



Graham King

MA in Economic Geography at UBC and Research Fellow at Stephen Jarislowsky Chair

Graham King is a Master of Arts student in the Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia. He graduated from Memorial University’s Business Administration program (BBA) and has worked with the Stephen Jarislowsky Chair at Memorial University for four years. His research critically analyzes the resource curse thesis: both how it operates in Newfoundland and Labrador, and how the work of the pre-eminent political economist Harold Innis may constructively and geographically engage such modes of theorizing.



Emile Tompa

Associate Professor of Economics, McMaster University, Assistant Professor of Public Health, University of Toronto, and Senior Scientist, Institute for Work and Health

Dr. Emile Tompa is a senior scientist at the Institute for Work & Health. Tompa is a labour and health economist with an MBA from the University of British Columbia, an MA in economics from the University of Toronto, and a PhD in economics from McMaster University. He holds appointments as an associate professor in the Department of Economics at McMaster University and as an assistant professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto. Tompa holds a six-year funding envelope as the nominated principal applicant from the New Frontiers in Research Fund Transformation Stream for a social innovation laboratory called Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA). The initiative is focused on skilling up employers to advance their abilities to tap into diverse talent pools, with a focus on persons with disabilities. Through IDEA and beyond, Tompa has focused much time on creating collaborations between academics, community members and other stakeholders, including policymakers at the provincial/territorial and federal levels, disability community organizations, and disability support program administrators. A key collaboration is the Disability in Work in Canada (DWC) initiative, for which he sits on the steering committee. DWC has developed a disability and work in Canada strategy and hosts an annual stakeholder conference and federal-provincial/territorial policy roundtable.



Jo-Ann Johnson

PhD Candidate in the School of Industrial Relations at Université de Montréal

Jo-Ann Johnson is a PhD candidate in the School of Industrial Relations at Université de Montréal, working under the supervision of Tania Saba, BMO Chair in Diversity and Governance. Her research focuses on the labour market integration of Québec’s diverse immigrant community, organizational policies aimed at integrating newcomers, employment equity, and firm performance. She has volunteered with various immigrant communities in the past and has extensive work experience in areas of governance and legal compliance.



Shannon Pestun

CEO of Pestun Consulting; Co-founder, The Finance Cafe

Shannon is the CEO of Pestun Consulting and Co-founder of The Finance Cafe. She also is a Senior Advisor to the Diversity Institute.

Over her career, Shannon has worked with academic, nonprofit, industry and governments from across Canada to build a more inclusive economy. Her experience, advocacy and leadership have made her a sought-after advisor and trusted voice on inclusive economic transformation.

Shannon is an accomplished speaker who has spoken not only across Canada but internationally, sharing the challenges and successes of building an inclusive and sustainable economy. Her compassionate and warm expertise speaks across differences to show how together we can break down barriers, build sustainable partnerships, unlock innovation and create a more inclusive economy.

As a Métis woman, Shannon is passionate about reconciliation and the economic empowerment of Indigenous Peoples. In 2020, she created the Gifting Circle Bursary for Indigenous women entrepreneurs raising nearly \$200,000 in support of advancing Indigenous women’s entrepreneurship in Canada.

Originating from the Métis homeland in Treaty 1, Shannon now resides in Treaty 7. She is a proud member of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

AI - Opportunities, Ethics, and Public Sentiments on Safety

Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming industries and societies at an unprecedented pace, offering vast opportunities for innovation and efficiency. This talk explores the multifaceted landscape of AI, delving into its potential to revolutionize sectors such as education, healthcare, and finance. We will examine the ethical considerations that arise with the deployment of AI technologies, including issues of bias, privacy, and accountability. Furthermore, we will discuss public sentiments on AI safety, addressing concerns and misconceptions that shape the discourse around AI's role in our future. By balancing optimism with caution, this talk aims to provide a comprehensive overview of AI's promise and the ethical frameworks necessary to ensure its safe and equitable integration into society.

Rhonda N. McEwen: President and vice-chancellor of Victoria University, University of Toronto

Me and My AI, Working Remote: Boosting Productivity/ Job Satisfaction or Inciting Labor-Management Conflict?

Abstract: Covid-19 changed the place where many workers worked, from offices and other business locations to their homes (WFH), where thanks to digitalization, powerful software including AI assistants, and the Internet, workers could avoid lengthy commutes and do their jobs at home. Firms found that WFH was more productive for some jobs but less productive for other jobs while in all cases saving costs on offices and other buildings.

Since the location of work can vary in any time period, the stage would seemingly be set for a new post-Covid equilibrium in the labor market with hybrid work locations, compensating differentials for WFH depending on worker desires, effects of WFH on productivity, and savings on office expenses. While some firms and workers have adjusted to workers new preference for WFH, many major firms have insisted on return-to-office (RTO) practices in the mid-2020s over the objections of workers, creating a major fault line in the labor market in the foreseeable future.

What is preventing the market adjudicating the differing desires of employers and employees? Who will win the RTO vs WFH battle over where workers will work? Will AI tip the balance to RTO or to WFH? This presentation will explore these questions in the never-ending struggle between labor and capital in economic life.

Richard Freeman, Herbert Ascherman Chair in Economics at Harvard University, Research Associate at NBER, and Faculty co-Director of the Center for Labor and a Just Economy at Harvard Law School

Alming for faster Canadian productivity growth: is it possible and should workers care?

Abstract: Despite fast growth in AI patents, Canadian productivity growth has ground to a halt. This could be due to slower growth in relevant Canadian research, in the conversion of this research into inventions or in the adoption of U.S. and European inventions. AI innovation could be less meaningful for growth than hoped or could yet revitalize growth with a lag. Since Canadian wages may have decoupled from productivity growth, these considerations may be of little import for Canadian workers on average. However, it seems likely that the advent of generative AI will disrupt the current pattern of returns to skills, creating winners and losers.

Jennifer Hunt, James Cullen Chair in Economics and Professor in the Department of Economics, Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences

AI, Innovation, and Productivity Growth in Canada

Abstract: This presentation explores AI’s potential as a general-purpose technology to drive innovation and productivity growth in Canada. It begins by analyzing micro-level evidence on AI adoption, revealing uneven uptake across firms and industries, along with its effects on product and process innovation. The discussion then connects AI to broader economic trends, including rising industry concentration and declining business dynamism, while assessing its implications for competition and market structure—key factors shaping AI’s aggregate productivity impact.

To quantify AI’s influence, the presentation introduces a source-of-growth accounting framework, decomposing labor productivity growth into three components: skill upgrading (via task automation/augmentation), capital deepening (investment in data/intangible assets), and multifactor productivity (MFP) growth (through technological diffusion and business dynamics). Finally, it benchmarks Canada’s performance in data, intangible assets, and MFP against the U.S. and Europe, offering insights into AI’s role in shaping cross-country productivity trends.

Wulong Gu: Senior Advisor in the Economic Analysis Division at Statistics Canada

Automation, Occupational Structure, and Productivity: Evidence from Korean Workplace Panel Survey

Abstract: The impact of automation on productivity remains a subject of ongoing debate, with empirical studies yielding mixed results. Drawing on data from the 2019 and 2021 waves of the Korean Workplace Panel Survey (WPS), this study finds that automation has a positive effect on productivity. Our analysis highlights changes in occupational structure as a key mechanism linking automation to productivity gains. However, these gains are not evenly distributed: they vary significantly across industries and between unionized and non-unionized workplaces. Furthermore, the effect of automation is moderated by the

intensity of worker training and the degree to which workers are involved in decision-making related to technology adoption.

Mingwei Liu, Professor and Associate Dean for Research at the School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University

AI and Labor Market Outcomes: Evidence from China

Abstract: This paper examines the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) adoption on labor market outcomes in China, drawing on comprehensive individual-level household survey data from 2010 to 2022 and an extensive dataset of two million AI firms spanning 2010–2024, obtained from China’s National Enterprise Credit Information Publicity System. The study classifies firms as AI-related based on keywords in their registered business scope, including machine learning, big data analytics, cloud computing, data mining, virtual reality, natural language processing, robotics automation, smart home systems, voice recognition, deep learning, and autonomous driving. By merging these datasets, the analysis explores how the expansion of AI firms influences employment and wages. The paper places particular emphasis on regional heterogeneity, highlighting how variations in technological adoption and economic development across jurisdictions shape labor market outcomes. This research offers a novel empirical perspective on the labor market implications of AI diffusion in a rapidly evolving economy.

Carl Lin, Associate Professor of Economics and Director of China Institute, Bucknell University

Can Canada Return to Trend Labour Productivity Growth of 1 Per Cent?”

Abstract: Since 2019, labour productivity growth in Canada has been abysmal. Between 2019 and 2024 business sector output per hour advanced at only a 0.4 per cent average annual pace, compared to around 1 per cent from 2000 to 2019 and of course much higher productivity growth rates before 2000. The objective of this presentation is to examine the reasons for the productivity drought or emergency, as it has been called by the Bank of Canada. The presentation also assesses the chances of Canada retuning to the pre-2019 productivity growth trend, either with or without policies targeted to improve productivity. Particular attention will be paid to the potential of AI to boost productivity, and to the impact of remote work on productivity.

Andrew Sharpe, Founder and Executive Director, Centre for the Study of Living Standards (CSLS)

Big Data and Long-term Care: Describing a New Platform in Ontario

Abstract: OnSPARK (Ontario Supporting Partnerships to Advance Care and Knowledge; <https://onspark.ca/>) is Canada’s largest (only?) long-term care (LTC) electronic medical record (EMR) data-sharing platform. It is a secure, real-time, and AI-driven data platform that integrates clinical, operational, and workforce data from LTC homes to drive quality improvement, research, and policy innovation. OnSPARK is a learning health system for LTC, designed to leverage real-world data from, at present, over 200 homes and 90,000 residents for continuous care improvements and AI-powered decision-making. OnSPARK, and various ongoing initiatives using the platform, will be discussed.

Arthur Sweetman, Professor of Economics, McMaster University

Why is AI not Revolutionizing Work? The Epistemology and Ethics of Deep Artificial Neural Networks

Abstract: Deep artificial neural networks—including LLMs—demonstrate impressive capacities. They can extend human cognition in various ways, support human judgment and be turned into a suite of virtual assistants. Many inferred from these advances that machine learning-based applications would have a profound effect on the economy and the job market, increasing both productivity and unemployment. Yet, contra the prognostications of several economists and tech leaders, AI adoption is much slower than predicted, and its effects on employment are hard to discern. I will argue that this is mainly due to the fundamental epistemic limitations of the best deep learning systems, as well as to the ethical risks that their deployment raises. If this view is accurate, it suggests that AI is unlikely to lead to massive unemployment, as the orientation that should guide public and private organizations that seek to implement AI technologies should be to ensure genuine human control over AI.

Jocelyn Maclure: Stephen A. Jarislowsky Chair in Human Nature and Technology and Professor of Philosophy, McGill University

Understanding Differences in Telework, Leisure, and Well Being Over Time: Evidence from the 2015 and 2022 Statistics Canada Time Use Surveys

Abstract: This study compares self reported measures of telework between the 2015 and 2022 Statistics Canada Time Use Surveys and evaluates changes in hours of work and well being. Results from econometric models indicate that teleworkers in both years reported experiencing more stress relative to non-teleworkers. On the other hand, while teleworkers in 2015 were more likely to report lower life satisfaction, the opposite is true for 2022 respondents. Teleworkers also report working fewer hours.

Anindya Sen, Professor of Economics, University of Waterloo, and Acting Executive Director, Waterloo Cybersecurity and Privacy Institute (CPI)

Telework and Firm Productivity: Evidence from Canada

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic led to a surge in the number of employees working from home in Canada and around the world. However, many employers have now implemented return-to-work policies to foster collaboration and boost productivity. Despite these recent changes, the effect of telework on productivity is not well understood. In this study, we provide nationally representative estimates of the effect of telework using a comprehensive data linkage environment from Statistics Canada. The data permit us to estimate changes in the share of employees working from home during the pandemic at the firm level and then track the resulting effects on sales and firm survival. We control for the endogenous adoption of telework using firms’ telework capacity—an exogenous measure of the share of employees who could in principle carry out their work from home. We find little evidence that telework capacity improves or impedes firm productivity and survival in the short run.

Derek Messacar, Associate Professor of Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Remote Work and Productivity in the United States

Abstract: The United States experienced an accelerated shift toward remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using ACS data (2010-2023) at the individual level and the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Productivity and Technology database (2010-2023) at the industry level, this study aims to address the following two critical questions: What factors influenced its adoption, and how did it impact productivity? We find that remote work, which surged during the pandemic, was influenced by job characteristics and demographics and was associated with substantial productivity gains and wage premiums. Furthermore, remote wage premiums varied across employer types, industries, and occupations. As hybrid and remote arrangements become a lasting feature of the post-pandemic workforce, nuanced policy and managerial responses are needed.

Yanhong Jin, Professor in the Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics at Rutgers University

Telework and Productivity: Evidence from a Survey of Quebec Government Employees

Abstract: This research surveyed 71,420 Quebec public service employees (April 2024) on telework impacts. Results show broad satisfaction, with 62% reporting higher productivity remotely versus 35% seeing no difference. Managers (n=2,690) held mixed views: 58% rated team efficiency as equal across settings, while 27% favored telework, though performance evaluation was deemed slightly easier onsite.

Preferences for hybrid work diverged—63% of employees wanted 4-5 telework days weekly, while managers leaned toward 3 days (30.2%). Key benefits included reduced commuting (64%) and improved focus (65%), but challenges like isolation (44%) and weakened team cohesion (37%) emerged. The findings highlight telework’s popularity for work-life balance but underscore tensions in implementation, particularly between staff desires and managerial oversight needs.

Benoit Dostie, Professeur, HEC Montréal, Directeur académique, CIQSS

Earnings Assimilation of Immigrants in Canada: 1971 – 2021

Abstract: This study analyzes immigrant earnings assimilation in Canada using census (1971-2021) and Labour Force Survey (2006-2021) data, focusing on employed individuals aged 25-55. While immigrants consistently earn less than native-born Canadians at entry, the gap has narrowed over time for most cohorts. However, significant disparities persist, especially for recent arrivals, women, and older immigrants, with incomplete convergence even after a decade. Earnings growth trajectories vary substantially by cohort, gender, and age at arrival, with sample selection strongly influencing observed patterns.

The study also examines labor market integration through discrete choice models, revealing immigrants are less likely to hold high-income, full-time jobs and more likely to work in low-income sectors. Even after 10 years, many remain underrepresented in stable, high-paying roles, with notable gender and cohort differences in occupational choices. These findings highlight the heterogeneous nature of immigrant assimilation, driven by cohort-specific factors, institutional barriers, and regional labor market dynamics.

Xingfei Liu, Associate Professor of Economics, University of Alberta

Optimal Level of Remote Work and Employee Wages: Evidence from a Representative Canadian Labour Force Survey

Abstract: In Canada, hybrid work has significantly influenced product innovation, management complexity, talent retention, and operational costs, among other factors (Fang 2024). This study theoretically examines the trade-offs between remote work's network externalities and the loss of agglomeration benefits, alongside cost savings due to remote work versus increased monitoring risks. We utilize Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey and remote work anticipation data (2023–2024Q1), and observe an inverted U-shaped relationship: a 1% rise in remote work increases wages by 4.818% initially, but this effect reverses beyond 10.78%. Instrumental variable (IV) analysis confirms causality with steeper thresholds. Industry heterogeneity is pronounced: Finance and Insurance peak at 7.83%, while Agriculture and Manufacturing decline at 0.91% and 1.96%, respectively. U-shaped sectors like Transportation (threshold=6.25%) highlight technology-driven efficiency rebounds. Mechanism tests further show stronger wage gains for parents of school-aged children, long-tenured employees, and full-time workers, while gender-dominated industries exhibit significant rigidity.

Emin Gahramanov, Professor of Economics, School of Business Administration American

Determinants and Effects of Remote Work Arrangements: Evidence from an Employer Survey

Abstract: Remote work arrangements are powerful examples of an organization's capability for using digital technology. This study uses data from a representative survey of Atlantic Canadian employers to assess three phenomena: how remote work changed over the course of the recent COVID-19 pandemic; the determinants of such changes; and the effects of such changes on business outcomes. Our results indicate that urban firms, technologically advanced firms in certain highly skilled industries, and firms that provided more flexibility to do remote work, were most likely to increase remote work practices during the pandemic. For the average firm, an increase in the share of remote work was associated with increased organizational productivity, employee performance, and new product/service innovation. The main downside was increased management complexity. Variation was seen along industry and provincial lines.

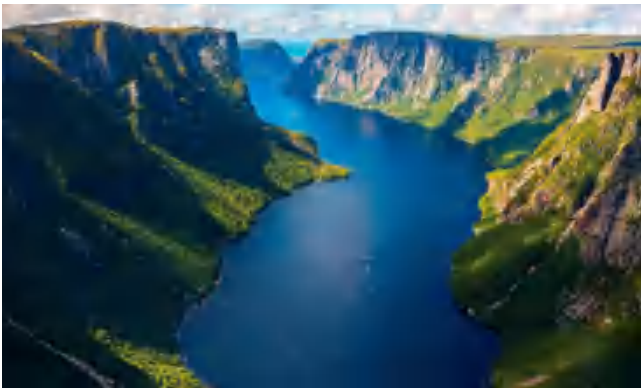
Graham King, MA Economic Geography at UBC, Research Fellow at Stephen Jarislowsky Chair Research Team at Memorial University of Newfoundland

Can Canada Return to Trend Labour Productivity Growth of 1 Per Cent?

Abstract: Since 2019, labour productivity growth in Canada has been abysmal. Between 2019 and 2024 business sector output per hour advanced at only a 0.4 per cent average annual pace, compared to around 1 per cent from 2000 to 2019 and of course much higher productivity growth rates before 2000. The objective of this presentation is to examine the reasons for the productivity drought or emergency, as it has been called by the Bank of Canada. The presentation also assesses the chances of Canada retuning to the pre-2019 productivity growth trend, either with or without policies targeted to improve productivity. Particular attention will be paid to the potential of AI to boost productivity, and to the impact of remote work on productivity.

Carl Lin, Associate Professor of Economics, Bucknell University

Nationas Parks & Natural Wonders



Gros Morne National Park
A UNESCO World Heritage Site featuring dramatic fjords, towering cliffs, and scenic hiking trails.



Terra Nova National Park
Home to dense forests, coastal inlets, and diverse wildlife.



Twilligate & Fogo Islands
Famous for iceberg watching, colorful fishing villages, and unique island culture.

St.John’s



The Rooms
The Rooms is the city’s most popular immersive experience in Newfoundland and Labrador cultural history, natural history, and local art.



Cape Spear Lighthouse National Historic Site
The easternmost point in North America, offering stunning sunrise views.



Quidi Vidi Village
A historic fishing village known for its charm, colorful houses, and local craft brewery.



Puffin & Whale Cruises in Witless Bay
See thousands of puffins and majestic humpback whales up close.



Signal Hill National Historic Site
Overlooks St. John’s Harbour and was the site of the first transatlantic wireless signal.



Middle Cove Beach
There are beautiful winter waves at Middle Cova Beach and viewpoints over the dramatic cliffs out towards the icy Atlantic Ocean.



May 8

The Emera Innovation
Exchange Conference Centre
Signal Hill Campus



May 9

- 1 Science Building,
Room SN2109
232 Elizabeth Ave.
- 2 R. Gushue Dining Hall,
Room DH 2002
9 Irwins Rd.

The locations of the conference are highlighted by the red arrows; so please park accordingly.

Conference
Program



MAY 8, 2025

Location	Signal Hill Campus Emera Innovation Exchange Conference Centre
1:00-1:10 pm	Welcome
1:10-1:30 pm	Opening Remarks
1:30-2:30 pm	Keynote Address
2:30-3:30 pm	Panel 1
3:30-3:40 pm	Health Break
3:40-4:40 pm	Panel 2
4:40-6:00 pm	Session 1
6:30-8:30 pm	Dinner

MAY 9, 2025

Location	St. John's Campus, 232 Elizabeth Ave., Science Building Room EN 2109
9:00-10:30 am	Keynote Address
10:30-10:45 am	Health Break
10:45-11:45 am	Panel 3
Location	St. John's Campus, 9 Irwins Rd. R. Gushue Dining Hall, Room DH 2002
11:45-12:45 pm	Session 2
12:45-1:45 pm	Lunch
1:45-2:45 pm	Session 3
2:45-3:45 pm	Session 4
3:45-4:45 pm	Panel 4
4:45-5:00 pm	Closing Remarks



Thank You