



# Concurrent Presentations

Theme:  
Building Better Allies

---

## A Game of Adding Ladders

### Presenters

Laleh Behjat, Schulich School of Engineering  
Jennifer van Zelm, WISE Planet  
Matthew Bardsley, Schulich School of Engineering

While discussions around Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) issues are often difficult, we can bring levity and cooperation through gamification. In this session, we show how major issues can be discussed in a friendly and disarming manner. We have developed a board game called Adding Ladders. This game is based on the game of Chutes and Ladders. In the game participants explore and discuss the issues facing women and minorities in STEM and collaborate to find solutions to overcome these issues. The session will start by placing the participants in groups of up to 8. We will do a quick introduction, followed by explaining the background and rules of the game. Then the participants will be asked to play the board game in their group. The game starts by each participant rolling a dice and moving to a square. There is a card associated with each square. Once a participant lands on a square, the card is picked up and read to the rest of the team. Each card discusses an issue faced by women in STEM. The group will try to find solutions for the problem to gain points. The game is played for approximately 30 minutes, after which the presenters will spend 10 minutes debriefing the participants. The ultimate goal of this workshop is to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion through gamifying these discussions. We want all participants to walk away thinking about how they can continue to support these discussions in their everyday life through constructive discussions.

---

## Allies through mentorship

### Presenter

Noor Al-Zanoon, WiSER, University of Alberta

One of the most important ways of advancing and retaining women and underrepresented groups in STEM careers is building robust social and professional networks. Mentorship programs with the goal of increasing chances for networking, creating a culture of inclusiveness and establishing role models within the field are the foundation to advancing women and underrepresented groups. Since 2015, Women in Science, Engineering and Research (WiSER), and University of Alberta Women in Science and Engineering (UA-WiSE) have successfully developed and implemented a mentorship program to support women and underrepresented individuals in STEM. The mentorship program is uniquely designed with a trio structure consisting of one undergraduate student, one graduate student or early-career professional, and one experienced professional. This structure provides a sustainable system for individuals at various stages of their STEM careers to connect, share, and learn valuable insight from one another. To date, the program has helped 136 trios build lasting mentor-mentee relationships. The

successes and challenges of this program will be discussed. This talk will also provide tips on mentorship best practices based on our experiences with past and present program participants.

---

### **Best Practices from Active Allies: A transformative study on the recruitment and retention of women in Saskatchewan mining and engineering**

#### **Presenters**

Jocelyn Peltier-Huntley, University of Saskatchewan  
Jovita Dias, University of Saskatchewan

Women and Indigenous peoples continue to be under-represented in many professions and industries in Canada, including the mining industry. Using a participatory research approach between industry and academic researchers, this International Mineral Innovation Institute (IMII) and Mitacs-funded study will put recommendations into action to shift Saskatchewan mining workplace culture to be inclusive and welcoming of all actual and potential employees. In this presentation, researchers will share findings from the second phase of the multi-phase study. In the second study phase, researchers interviewed allies and champions to capture examples and best practices of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) implementations in workplaces and institutions. Study participants are implementing broad equity changes, including a focus on gender and Indigenous engagement and reconciliation. In this presentation, researchers will share actions and learnings from participants. Furthermore, researchers will share recommendations and strategies to activate workplace allies, a necessary element to creating an inclusive and equitable workplace where diversity can thrive. Workplace allies may or may not be part of under-represented groups and may hold power and privilege within the organizations in which they work. In future phases of the study, researchers will implement and test recommendations to activate allies in a pilot program at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Engineering and then test implementations on a larger scale at a Saskatchewan mine site. The outcomes of this multi-phase study will put recommendations into action to shift Saskatchewan mining and engineering workplace culture to be inclusive and welcoming of all actual and potential employees.

---

### **Building a Collaborative Network**

#### **Presenters**

Laleh Behjat, University of Calgary  
Shohini Ghose, Wilfrid Laurier University  
Catherine Mavriplis, University of Ottawa  
Anne Ndegwa, University of Calgary

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Network of NSERC Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) developed a Network of Collaboration program for faculty and postdoctoral women researchers centered around building creative collaborations in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The purpose of the initiative was to facilitate connections and collaborations between women academics from across Canada and from all career levels in STEM who were experiencing increased isolation due to the pandemic. The specific goals of the program included: 1. Building connections and providing networking opportunities; 2. Providing practical tools and resources for effective collaborations; and 3. Facilitating research and academic collaboration. This presentation showcases the use of creative collaboration tools to establish and develop networks based on the WISE Network of Collaboration program. The program includes practical tools such as conflict resolution, creativity, financing/entrepreneurship, leadership, and suit-training. Based on the experience of the WISE Network of Collaboration program, information is presented on how to build and maintain inclusive collaboration networks where women in STEM are supported. Outcomes from the program are presented as well as

opportunities to apply creative collaboration tools to other areas that support women in becoming change leaders in STEM.

---

## **Creating Inclusive Cultures through Allyship**

### **Presenters**

Tracy Boyer, YWCA Halifax Shift Change Project

Bonnie Douglas, CCWESTT Project Manager

How can men see themselves as part of positive change in the gender movement and why does that matter? What could we do to accelerate culture change in the workplace? We invite women, men, and non-binary people to participate in a facilitated session to hear about the YWCA Shift Change Project through the eyes of a male supervisor and other lived experiences. You will participate in energetic table conversations around creating inclusive culture through allyship. These conversations will be an opportunity for people to listen to lived experiences, connect ideas and explore how we can transform and accelerate positive culture change in the workplace. We will spotlight the CCWESTT We Are Trades project work and how this work can support change for industry and DEI efforts. We will share our learning around training to creating a culture shift in skilled trades and understanding in this work through lived experiences that bring many voices and actors to the table. Everyone who attends will have an opportunity to participate in listening, learning and conversations. We will host a safe(r) space that seeks to include and honour each of the people who give their time and input into this session, and we commit to providing all participants with a post session summary. Take away learning, contribute to it and build forward.

---

## **Engineers and Geoscientists BC EDI Journey: Actions we are taking and how industry can support EDI**

### **Presenters**

Ailene Lim, Acting Director, Programs and Professional Development, Engineers and Geoscientists BC

Marcie Cochrane, EDI Specialist, Engineers and Geoscientists BC

Diverse experience and perspective are key to human innovation. Engineers are leaders in innovation, and as such are reliant on the different people that enter the profession. In order for professionals of all backgrounds to be able to do their best work, they need to feel like they belong to their professional community. This is where Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) become fundamental to engineering. As a profession, it is important to excite and inspire action towards developing an inclusive culture for current and future generations of engineers and truly reflect Canada's diverse society. This presentation will discuss why advancing EDI in our professions is important, the actions that Engineers and Geoscientists BC are taking, and how industry can support these actions. As part of Engineers and Geoscientists BC's strategic priorities, fostering diversity and inclusion has been a key area of focus. This presentation will discuss the organization's journey in developing its EDI strategy and action plan, as well as the framework for our continued journey to lead change towards equity and inclusion within the professions of engineering and geoscience. We will share some of the key initiatives the organization is taking to embed EDI within our programs and within our role as a regulator, including the development of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Professional Practice Guidelines which are applicable to all registrants, including individuals and firms. Sharing what we have learned, this presentation will build connections between our actions and what can be done by those in industry.

---

## **Engineers Canada's EDI Training for engineers**

### **Presenters**

Cassandra Polyzou, Manager, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Engineers Canada  
Christine Plourde, Senior Engineer/ Risk Assessor at Wood PLC, member of the EDI Training Task Force  
Ailene Lim, Acting Director, Programs and Professional Development, Engineers and Geoscientists BC

Engineers Canada and the engineering regulators understand the importance of supporting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within the engineering profession. EDI in engineering means engaging and retaining the best minds of the profession, which includes but is not limited to all genders, LGBTQ2S+ communities, Indigenous people, Black people, people of colour, and persons with disabilities. In order to engage a diversity of perspectives and lived experiences, engineers and engineering workplaces need to promote a culture of inclusion and address existing stereotypes and systemic discrimination that result in a culture of exclusion in the profession. As part of Engineers Canada's 2019-2021 strategic plan and its operational imperative to promote diversity and inclusion in the profession that reflects Canadian society, Engineers Canada has identified the need for greater understanding and competencies related to EDI within the profession. Engineers Canada has partnered with Engineers and Geoscientists British Columbia to form the EDI Training Task Force to aid in creating an EDI training module for engineers. The training is one step towards supporting more inclusive leadership, building better allies, and embedding EDI into the engineering profession through self-reflection and learning.

---

## **Gender Partnership: Sponsorship as the ticket to Gender Equity**

### **Presenter**

Lesley Parrott-Galgay, Genesis

Gender equity is not a zero-sum game. In fact, the Institute for Gender Partnership reports that organizations committed to gender equity achieve 22% higher productivity, 47% return on equity and 39% increase in customer satisfaction. In a scenario where men and women have the ability to contribute equally, we have the opportunity to add \$28 trillion to the annual GDP. Effective gender partnership is a \$28 trillion dollar business decision.

Beyond the business case, gender partnership is a moral decision. It is the 'right thing to do'. To truly close the gender gap we need to engage in an organizational culture mindset shift and that requires participation of everyone – regardless of gender identification or career level. This cultural mindset shift cannot happen overnight, nor can it happen through one-off training sessions. Real change happens through a series of nudges - building awareness, knowledge, desire and, ultimately, real action. In this session participants will learn what it takes to move from awareness to action – what it means to be an active gender ally in the workplace, the first steps to engage in meaningful gender partnership and how sponsorship is 'the ticket' to gender equity.

---

## **How Settler Allies can walk with Indigenous Engineers**

### **Presenters**

Jessica Vandenberghe, University of Alberta, Faculty of Engineering

The Engineering Profession is still predominantly in demographic held by European descendants, typically of male gender. We know though that the math and science capability exist in all genders and ethnic backgrounds. One important demographic that needs strong allyship, sponsorship, and partnership is that of Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Metis, and Inuit. This interactive session will touch on oppressive Canadian history, the challenges for Indigenous Peoples and Communities, what this Indigenous, female Engineer is looking for in an ally and how you can start implementing the Calls to Action every day in both your personal and professional life. The learning outcomes of this session will be an ability to articulate Canada's historic oppression towards Indigenous Peoples, understand the

impact of historic events on individuals and communities, build confidence to be able to respectfully be an ally to Indigenous Peoples, and understand how the Calls to Action can be implemented every day. By the end of this session, participants will feel more comfortable in engaging in Truth and Reconciliation conversations and find themselves motivated to take small steps towards a strong and more reciprocal relationship with Indigenous Peoples and Communities.

---

## **LGBTQ+ Postdocs in Science: Perspectives on Representation, Mentorship, and Coming Out**

### **Presenters**

Drew Burchell, MSVU and IWK  
Dr. Tamara Franz-Odendaal, MSVU  
Phillip Joy, MSVU

Increasing representation and inclusion of marginalized groups in science would increase opportunities for these groups and advance equity. However, Western science has historically been male-dominated and associated with hegemonic masculinity. While there is a substantial body of literature on women's inclusion in science, less is known about LGBTQ+ representation. There is also little data about the postdoc experience. To explore these topics, we conducted a qualitative study on the experiences of LGBTQ+ Canadian postdocs in science fields. The study was framed within a post-structural lens. We recruited participants through postdoc associations and social media channels. Fourteen self-identifying LGBTQ+ participants completed semi-structured interviews about their postdoc experiences. Data were analyzed thematically. Representation, mentorship, and coming out were themes that emerged from the data. Most participants voiced that LGBTQ+ representation in the sciences is important for younger scientists to see. However, coming out was described as a personal choice, and participants chose carefully which contexts to come out in. Overall, these results show the critically important role representation and mentorship play for marginalized groups in science in Canada.

---

## **Mentoring as a Team Sport**

### **Presenter**

Denise Pothier, Stantec

It takes a village. Peer-to-peer or group mentoring is gaining momentum, especially in situations where there are few senior mentors in a given location or profession. I will use our POD (yes, as in peas in a pod) example - a mentoring group of women in engineering.

---

## **SETT FOR LIFE-ALLYSHIP IN ACTION ALIGNING STARS FOR EVERYONE**

### **Presenter**

Tinaye Manyimo, Shumba Consulting

As we reflect on our action plans how do we connect intersectionality, inclusive leadership, recruitment, retention, outreach and cultural transformation with an allyship lens? What roles do Boards and Staff play in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion initiatives? Various dimensions of diversity such as race, gender, culture, class, and ability have historically created privileges as well as barriers. In today's workplace organizations, through leadership awareness and action are now working on different initiatives that build more inclusive work environments to improve participation and access for underrepresented and marginalized groups. Our workshop we will start with a personal inventory exercise which will set the stage for our overview and introduction to ally-ship. Our discussion will allow us to have an engaging courageous conversation, share resources and be informed on what actions in our roles as leaders,

learners, educators and community members we can take to reduce barriers and promote diversity and inclusion through meaningful ally-ship. In this workshop we will identify relevant terminology with respect to ally-ship; including what it is, the various types, strategies to act in ally-ship with minorities and active ways to make one's privilege work for others. Demonstrate an understanding of the current and historical barriers that certain groups of people encounter in the community, when entering and within the workforce. Reflect on how these barriers can affect the vision and values within and outside the and ways to overcome them.

---

**We are all mentors: A panel discussion with women across the many professional stages of water engineering from early Master's and PhD studies to Postdoctoral Fellows and Alumnae**

**Moderator:** Dr. Jennie Rand, Associate professor of engineering, Acadia University

**Panelists:** Dr. Wendy Krkosek, Water Quality Manager, Halifax Water; Kalli Hood, PhD Candidate, Centre for Water Resources Studies, Dalhousie University; Meghan Swanburg, P.Eng, Masters candidate Acadia University; Dr. Crystal Sweeney, Postdoctoral Fellow, CWRS, Dalhousie University; Dr. Sarah Jane Payne, Assistant Professor, Civil Engineering, Queen's University

As the gender gap in water engineering begins to narrow in younger employees (< 45-year-olds), there remains a significant imbalance at higher levels of leadership, leaving younger women to navigate their early career stages with an abundance of these male-dominated manager/management relationships. In response, members of the Centre for Water Resources Studies (CWRS) research team will offer an all-woman panel discussion with participants representing multiple stages across the training and professional development trajectory, including early master's students, PhD students, post-doctoral fellows, research associates, and alumni who have gone on to careers in the water industry. The panel discussion will include both planned questions to highlight participants' experiences with leadership development, associated feelings of insecurity and success, involvement in community engagement, and any obstacles – both internal and external – that they have encountered in their journeys. Additional time will be available for an open question and answer period with the audience. Given the relative lack of women leaders to look to for guidance, the panel discussion will focus on approaches, solutions, and the role of peer-mentorship to find professional success in this male-dominated industry.

---

**What Do Managers of SETT Women Need to Support Gender Inclusive Change in their Workplace Culture?: Sharing the Results of the WinSETT Needs Assessment.**

**Presenters**

Carrie Vos, WinSETT Centre

Susan Hollett, WinSETT Centre

This session will share the results of that Needs Assessment and engage participants in helping analyze that data. The Needs Assessment will probe what knowledge and skills they managers need, how would they like to learn and develop the knowledge and skills and what supports they need to do so. As WinSETT develops its Human Resources Certificate Program for Employers and Managers of SETT Women, we will lean heavily on the evidence of the Needs Assessment and the insight of CCWESTT participants as they review and discuss the results of the Needs Assessment. This session will provide participants with an insight into what managers have told us is needed to successfully support gender inclusivity in their workplace.