



CSPC Budget Symposium: Speaker Bios

Session I: Keynote Address

David Watters, President, Global Advantage Consulting

David Watters worked for 30 years in the Canadian Public Service, including a dozen years as an Assistant Deputy Minister at Industry Canada, Treasury Board Canada and Finance Canada. In 2002 David established the Global Advantage Consulting Group Inc. (Ottawa) and is now the President and CEO of this strategic management consulting firm. The firm has completed over 650 contracts for clients specializing in: analyzing and “mapping” complex public policy economic systems; creating collaborative business models for service delivery; aligning operational processes among networked organizations for enhanced decision-making; and designing growth strategies for organizations, particularly in the areas of research and technology development, innovation, commercialization and trade. David holds a Bachelor’s degree in Economics and a Law degree in corporate, commercial, and tax law from Queen’s University Law School. He was also an adjunct Professor for seven years at the Telfer School of Management at the University of Ottawa.

Michael Rowell, Director of Data Analytics and Business Development at Global Advantage Consulting Group

Michael Rowell is the Director of Data Analytics and Business Development at Global Advantage Consulting Group in Ottawa. Michael specializes in developing and implementing data analytics strategies, conducting market research, building relationships with clients and partners, and analyzing complex data sets to provide insights and recommendations. Michael holds a Master of Science in Global Politics from the London School of Economics, and a Joint-Honours Bachelor in Political Science and History from McGill University.

Session II: Academia

Aminah Robinson Fayek – Vice-President of Research and Innovation, University of Alberta

Dr. Aminah Robinson Fayek is Vice-President (Research and Innovation) and a professor in engineering at the University of Alberta. Throughout her academic career, she has demonstrated excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and partnership. Dr. Robinson Fayek is a renowned expert in artificial intelligence techniques for developing decision support in the construction industry. She has created an internationally-renowned research program that has been recognized by a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair and three consecutive terms of an NSERC Industrial Research Chair. Dr. Robinson Fayek has received further recognition in the form of many national- and international-level awards, including a commendation award from the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction, the Peurifoy Construction Research Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the Walter Shanly Award from the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering.



Malcolm Campbell, VP, Research, University of Guelph

Malcolm Campbell has been University of Guelph's Vice President (Research) since 2015. Malcolm has a BSc in genetics and a PhD in biochemistry from UofG, obtained post-doctoral experience in France and USA, was a tenured faculty member at Oxford University, and a professor and senior administrator at University of Toronto. With expertise in genome biology and biotechnology, research and innovation, Malcolm serves on many boards and advisory bodies for industry and government. Amongst his diverse vice-presidential duties, Malcolm oversees UofG's partnership with OMAFRA, and is institutional lead of its Canada First Research Excellence Fund initiative "Food from Thought".

Padmapriya Muralidharan – Chair, Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars

Dr. Padmapriya (Priya) Muralidharan is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology at Simon Fraser University (SFU), Burnaby campus. She is a cellular electrophysiologist with a background in cardiovascular electrophysiology and has experience studying different ion channels across various cell types. Now her research is focused on studying ion channel biophysics using induced pluripotent stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes with Prof Thomas Claydon. Having worked on hiPSC-derived cardiomyocytes, she is keen on expanding her electrophysiology expertise to studying hiPSC-derived neurons. She pursued her Ph.D. at the University of Western Australia, moved to Memphis, USA, for her first postdoc, and then moved to Canada for her second postdoc.

She is the Chair of the Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars (CAPS/ACPP). She has a strong interest in advocating for postdocs across Canada. She serves as the VP External at the Simon Fraser University Postdoctoral Association and helps liaise with the university administration to design better benefits plans for postdocs. She is also a member of the Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology (SCWIST), where she works with advocacy and policy-making group to analyze the existing educational policies across Canada at grad school and postdoctoral levels.

Sarah Laframboise, Organizer, Support Our Science

Sarah is a PhD Student studying Biochemistry at the University of Ottawa. Her research investigates the use of yeast as a model organism to answer important questions about human disease and cancers. Outside of the lab, Sarah has been active in the science communication and science policy fields. She works as a program manager at CSPC and has been the Co-Chair of the Editorial Committee for the last 4 years, where she is the Editor-In-Chief of the last 3 editions of the Canadian Science Policy Magazine. And is a part-time student at NSERC's VP of Research Grants and Scholarships Office.

Recently, Sarah founded the Ottawa Science Policy Network, a student-run club at the University of Ottawa which aims to implement the use of evidence in policy decisions at the university and government levels, and more recently has advocated for increasing graduate student stipends. Additionally, Sarah is one of the organizers of the Support Our Science Campaign which organized a rally on Parliament Hill in August. Additionally, her and her team have launched an official petition to the House of Commons with over 4500 signatures. Over the last few months, Sarah has been active on the radio, media, and podcasts discussing the state



of Graduate Student Finances in Canada, as well as meeting with Ministers and Members of Parliaments to advocate for these issues.

Dr. Steven Liss, Toronto Metropolitan University Vice-President, Research and Innovation

Steven N. Liss has been Toronto Metropolitan University's Vice-President, Research and Innovation since 2017, following a decade of distinguished service at the University of Guelph and at Queen's University, where he served as Vice-Principal (Research). A professor of Chemistry and Biology, he is an internationally recognized researcher in environmental biotechnology and engineering, wastewater and water management, having made important contributions and insights on microbial structures and processes in natural and engineered environmental systems.

Session III: Business and Industry

Jeanette Jackson – CEO, Foresight Canada

Jeanette is an experienced CEO and entrepreneur with broad experience in strategy, innovation, business development, marketing, and operations. As the CEO of Foresight, Jeanette has led rapid growth, transforming a regional organization into Canada's largest cleantech accelerator. Since 2018, under her leadership, Foresight has expanded accelerator programs, built a vibrant Industry Innovation Program, and launched a sectoral approach to accelerate cleantech innovation. Jeanette is a frequent speaker, media guest, and advisor to innovators, industry, investors and government.

Prior to joining Foresight, Jeanette was founding CEO of Light-Based Technologies, which she built into a scaling enterprise with venture capital support and a successful personal exit in 2011. As President of The Brag Company, she oversaw the complete restructuring of the business and sale of the company in just two years. As an Executive in Residence with Foresight, Jeanette advised more than 25 ventures in several markets including bio-energy, electric vehicles, smart buildings, water tech, robotics, and wind.

Karimah Es Sabar – CEO, Quark Venture

Karimah Es Sabar is a highly-recognized global life sciences leader with an exceptional career spanning multi-national pharmaceutical/biotechnology companies, startups, not-for-profit organizations and venture investment firms. She has provided leadership in marketing, business development, strategic and global alliances, public-private partnerships, translation strategies and execution, innovation ecosystems, entrepreneurship in start-ups, and in bioscience investments.

Ms. Es Sabar is the founding CEO & General Partner at Quark Venture LP, a global venture capital firm, and Director of the Global Health Sciences [GHS] Fund. Prior to joining Quark Venture, Ms. Es Sabar was CEO & President of the Centre for Drug Research and Development (CDRD); CEO & President of LifeSciences BC; and she has held several senior management positions in the biopharmaceutical industry, most notably at Sanofi Pasteur as global head of BD and International Division. She also co-founded and enabled several start-up companies.



Ms. Es Sabar has received multiple awards and recognitions for her leadership and pioneering work, including Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Award. She holds an Executive Certificate in Management and Leadership from the MIT Sloan School of Management; a MSc degree in Neurochemistry from the Institute of Psychiatry, University of London, England; and a BSc Joint Honours degree in Biochemistry/Chemistry from the University of Salford in Manchester, England.

She has served on numerous private, public and not-for-profit boards. Since 2017 she is Chair of the Health/Biosciences Economic Strategy Table (Government of Canada) and a Member of the Industry Strategy Council (Government of Canada).

Matthew Foss – Vice-President of Research and Public Policy, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

Matthew Foss is a member of the Métis Nation of Alberta, with over 20 years of research and public policy experience. He currently serves as the Vice President of Research & Public Policy for the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business and is an Executive Fellow at the University of Calgary School of Public Policy. Matthew's focus at the CCAB is on advancing Indigenous business through procurement, international trade, celebrating Indigenous entrepreneurs and natural resource development. Prior to joining CCAB, he ran his own energy economics and public policy consulting business for several years and served as the Chief Energy Economist for the Alberta Government.

Namir Anani – President/ CEO, Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC)

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).

He has also 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) as well as a Professional Engineer designation in Ontario (P. Eng.).



Robert Asselin, Senior Vice President, Policy, Business Council of Canada

Robert leads the policy team and the Council's work on economic and fiscal policy. He has written extensively on innovation and industrial policy. Robert brings more than 10 years of experience in providing policy advice to government, including in roles as Policy and Budget Director to Canada's Finance Minister and as Advisor to Prime Ministers Paul Martin and Justin Trudeau. Prior to joining the Council, he spent two years at BlackBerry as Senior Global Director, Public Policy. Robert also spent nearly a decade in academia as Associate Director of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa and as Visiting Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. He continues to serve as a Fellow at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and at the Public Policy Forum.