



# **Advancing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in the Future Electricity Sector Workforce: Event Report**

**February 25, 2022**



**Advancing Inclusion, Diversity,  
Equity, and Accessibility in  
the Future Electricity Sector  
Workforce: Event Report**

February 25, 2022

*Aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Promouvoir l'inclusion, la diversité, l'équité et l'accessibilité dans la future main-d'œuvre du secteur de l'électricité : rapport d'événement*

For information regarding reproduction rights, contact Natural Resources Canada at [copyright-droitdauteur@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca](mailto:copyright-droitdauteur@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca).

Cat. No. M159-21/2023E-PDF (Online)  
ISBN 978-0-660-48599-7

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Natural Resources, 2023

# Contents

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Message from the Director General</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Event overview</b>	<b>5</b>
How do inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility relate to NRCan programming?	5
Role of advancing IDEA in the electricity sector	6
<b>Event summary</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Foundational pillars for advancing IDEA</b>	<b>7</b>
Listening to and understanding needs	8
Advancing allyship	8
Addressing bias	9
Avoiding common pitfalls	10
Collaborating meaningfully	10
<b>Key building blocks for advancing IDEA</b>	<b>11</b>
Creating safe workplaces	11
Enabling pathways for support	12
Establishing IDEA goals and acting on public commitments	12
Developing a plan for IDEA	12
Supporting career development networks	13
Addressing HR practices	13
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix A. Key terms</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix B. Presentation summaries</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Keynote speech: <i>Does Canada have the workforce to keep the lights on?</i></b>	<b>17</b>
Mark Chapeskie	17
Key takeaways	18



<b>Panel speaker 1. <i>Improving gender diversity</i></b>	<b>19</b>
Joanna Osawe	19
Key takeaways	20
<b>Panel speaker 2. <i>Improving accessibility for persons with disabilities</i></b>	<b>20</b>
Andrew Blaikie	20
Key takeaways	21
<b>Panel speaker 3. <i>Improving the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to participate in the energy transition</i></b>	<b>22</b>
Alexandra Thomson	22
Key takeaways	23
<b>Panel speaker 4. <i>Creating a workforce more inclusive of inclusive of racialized Canadians</i></b>	<b>24</b>
Rebecca Darwent	24
Key takeaways	25
<b>Panel speaker 5. <i>Engaging with youth in the future electricity sector workforce in Canada</i></b>	<b>26</b>
Helen Watts	26
Key takeaways	27
<b>Appendix C. Breakout sessions summary</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix D. Resources</b>	<b>30</b>

# Executive summary

In 2022, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) partnered with Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC). They staged an event to provide a unique opportunity to hear from organizations leading the way in advancing renewable energy in Canada by tapping into the sectoral expertise of historically under-represented communities.

The Advancing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in the Future Electricity Sector Workforce Event invited participants from NRCan's Smart Grid Program, its Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program, and electric utilities.

The objectives were to:

- Describe the labour market conditions for inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA, formerly equity, diversity and inclusion [EDI]). The information included challenges and opportunities to enhance IDEA for under-represented groups in the Canadian electricity sector that were identified in assessments of the electricity sector.
- Share participant experiences, lessons learned and case studies of organizational activities to promote IDEA principles
- Provide participants with a set of tools and practical actions to enhance IDEA within their organizations and initiatives

To deliver on these objectives, NRCan, in partnership with EHRC, developed an education session for program proponents. The event included an address about electricity sector workforce trends, five panels on aspects of advancing IDEA in the electricity sector, and breakout sessions with the panel speakers for detailed discussion and sharing of lessons learned.

Despite the unique challenges that each panelist expressed, the solutions had common themes. Those themes are that organizations need to take active steps to dismantle barriers to accessing the workplace and need to work to understand diverse individual needs.

**To enable these actions, the speakers, breakout sessions and participants highlighted important foundational pillars for this process, including:**

- **Listening to and understanding needs** including engaging in research, speaking with the workforce and engaging in professional networks. This work requires looking beyond the numbers and integrating qualitative insights. Although tracking change is important, it is also important not to put people into boxes. Understanding the stories behind the experiences of the workforce is also important. Both qualitative and quantitative information bring insights.
- **Advancing allyship** by providing support and a space to listen and by committing to active allyship to move beyond performative action
- **Addressing bias** by understanding bias and developing practices to reduce it (e.g. perception bias, affinity bias, and confirmation bias)

- **Avoiding common pitfalls** such as tokenism, micro-aggressions and white saviourism by enabling workplace policies and environments that educate, address and reduce these elements
- **Collaborating meaningfully** by working with groups and networks that represent the diverse communities that organizations want to reach; by engaging with educational institutions; and by engaging meaningfully with communities

**These foundational pillars can be supported by continual action. Several action areas for advancing IDEA were highlighted and include, but are not limited to, the following action areas:**

- Creating safe workspaces
- Establishing goals and participating in public commitments
- Developing a plan for IDEA
- Supporting career development networks
- Enabling pathways for support (e.g. sponsorship, mentorships and employee networks, partnerships with communities and organizations)
- Being proactive and making conscious changes when updating and addressing HR practices

Organizations must start by having honest and courageous conversations among their leadership teams and engaging the organization's entire workforce. The purpose is to better understand and articulate the organization's goal and assess what the workforce understands about IDEA. This work involves going beyond surveys to understand what IDEA ideally looks like in your organization and what is needed to achieve IDEA goals.

This process is incredibly important to develop a collaborative plan for IDEA and achieve support across the organization. There are numerous resources and external experts that can help with advancing IDEA. The resources mentioned throughout this report (as listed in Appendix D) are a great starting place.

# Message from the Director General

The Office of Energy Research and Development (OERD) at Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) is committed to advancing IDEA and reconciliation efforts across our programming and within our internal operations. OERD recognizes that many organizations we work with in our programming will be at different stages of implementation. Events such as the Advancing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in the Future Electricity Sector Workforce Event facilitate dialogue, learning, and sharing lessons learned across projects funded by our programs.

NRCan and OERD programs continue to advance the representation of under-represented and groups that have been excluded historically in the energy sector through a variety of initiatives:

- Women in Cleantech Challenge – supported six women innovators in clean technology, bringing new ideas and diversity of thought to realize new technological solutions
- Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program – focuses on community-led clean energy projects that reduce reliance on diesel fuel for heat and power while also creating jobs
- Indigenous Off-Diesel Initiative – supports Indigenous-led climate solutions in remote Indigenous communities that currently use diesel or fossil fuels for heat and power
- Science and Technology Internship Program – Green Jobs – facilitates employing youth in natural resources sectors and promotes inclusion by targeting 60% participation from employment equity groups
- Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways Program – supports increased Indigenous involvement and ownership of clean energy projects and encourages the participation of other under-represented groups in the renewable energy sector
- Equal by 30 Campaign – brings together organizations and governments to close the gender gap and provide insights for including women and other under-represented groups in the clean energy sector
- Smart Grid Program – addresses key infrastructure to better utilize existing electricity assets and foster innovation and clean jobs and uses training and hiring metrics at gender and other disaggregated levels for evidence-based program and policy design
- Emerging Renewable Power Program – supports commercially viable renewable energy sources and uses training and hiring metrics at gender and other disaggregated levels for evidence-based program and policy design

OERD also works closely with other parts of NRCan to learn from their design and implementation experience, which is captured in the OERD Phased Approach for Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility, launched in August 2021.

OERD is a leader in energy research, development and demonstration programming. OERD recognizes that progress on energy innovation will rely heavily on the capacity of the future workforce to develop more sustainable solutions by applying IDEA principles to energy innovation. OERD looks to you as leaders in the electricity sector to understand your involvement in this process so we all can improve our approaches.

During the Advancing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in the Future Electricity Sector Workforce Event, we heard from experts, colleagues and peers about advancing IDEA in the workplace. Participants and experts provided resources and shared experiences and lessons learned for engaging with the future workforce and advancing IDEA in this process. We are happy to share the outcomes from the event, including tools and materials to apply these actions in your own workplaces.

We understand that this is just the beginning, so we look forward to ongoing conversations with our proponents and stakeholders on these topics as we develop and deliver equity-centred approaches to our energy innovation programming.



**Amanda Wilson** (she, her, elle)  
Director General  
Office of Energy Research and Development

# Event overview

In 2022, NRCan partnered with EHRC to deliver an event on advancing IDEA (formerly EDI) in the electricity sector workforce. The Advancing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in the Future Electricity Sector Workforce Event featured presentations from leaders and change makers with diverse experiences.

The objectives of the event were to:

- Provide information from electricity sector assessments of the labour market conditions for IDEA, including identified challenges and opportunities to enhance IDEA for under-represented groups in the Canadian electricity sector
- Share participant experiences, lessons learned and case studies of organizational activities to promote IDEA principles
- Provide participants with a set of tools and practical actions to enhance IDEA within their organizations and initiatives

## How do inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility relate to NRCan programming?

NRCan aims to deliver programming that benefits all Canadians. Doing this requires learning new processes, understanding sector needs and challenging the status quo. Reconciliation is also a key aspect of the work at NRCan that has parallel and important factors that are separate from but also related to IDEA.

NRCan programming integrates voluntary or mandatory requirements for IDEA and supports advancing IDEA and representation in the workforce. NRCan is motivated by the departmental mandate and calls to action to advance IDEA within its work.

NRCan is engaged in developing IDEA in its programming through research, stakeholder engagement, and ongoing discussions with its program proponents. The Advancing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility in the Future Electricity Sector Workforce Event is one step NRCan has taken to develop the tools that the department and its proponents need to advance the IDEA process.

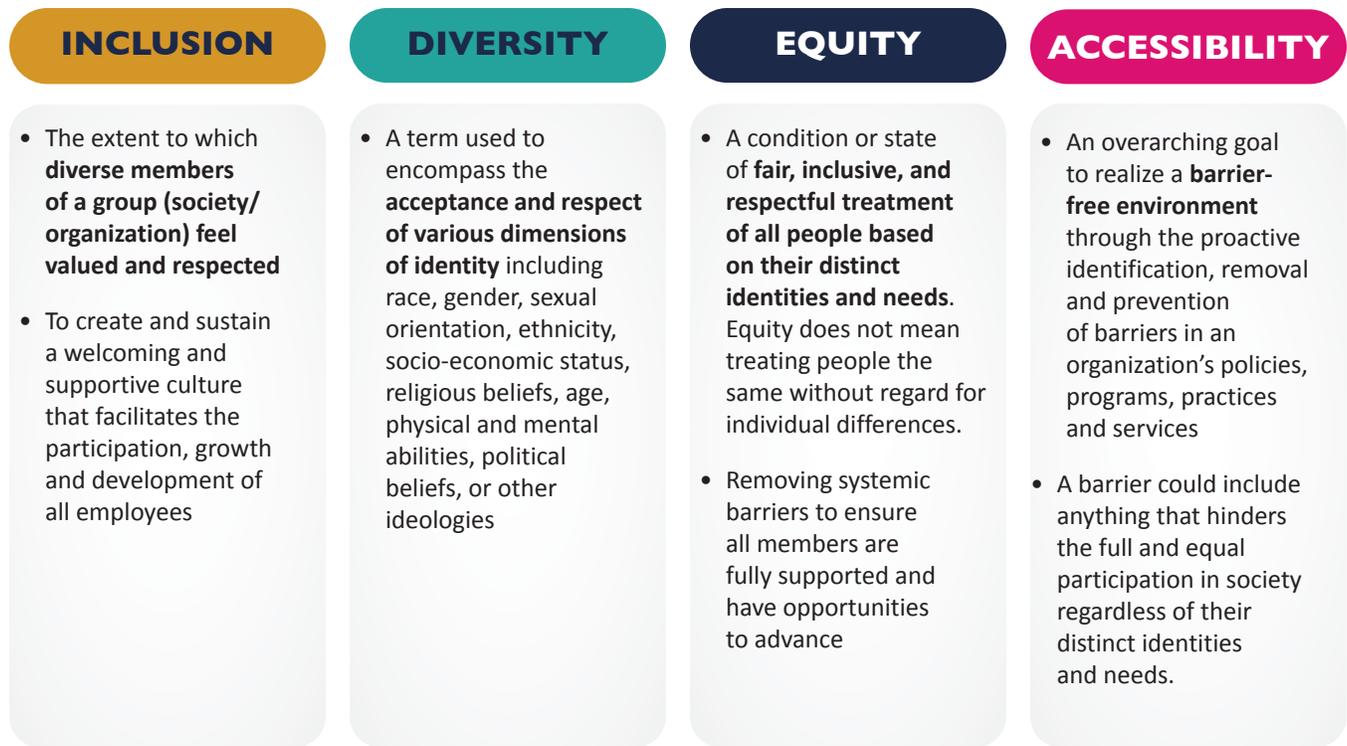


Figure 1. IDEA terminology

## Role of advancing IDEA in the electricity sector

Advancing IDEA in the electricity sector is crucial, given that the electricity sector workforce today does not reflect the diversity of Canadians. In the future, diversity will be a defining characteristic of Canada's workforce.

According to Statistics Canada,

- Landed immigrants made up the majority (60%) of employment gains in 2017.
- Nearly 80% of the Indigenous population in Canada are under 55 years old, in contrast to 67% in the rest of Canada.

In 2017 women represented only 26% of the electricity workforce in contrast to the national average of 48%, as stated in EHRC's *Workforce in Motion* report. The under-representation of women is just one of the gaps that exist in the electricity sector. Historically, many other groups, including people with disabilities, racialized individuals, Indigenous Peoples, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, have been excluded in this industry.

The following sections in the report provide an overview of the outcomes of the event and highlight the tools, lessons learned, and key takeaways from the presentations and breakout sessions. Detailed summaries of the presentations and breakout sessions are in Appendix B and C, respectively.

# Event summary

Throughout the event, experts and participants shared their lessons learned for advancing IDEA within the electricity sector. Advancing IDEA requires taking a needs-based approach that adopts empathy throughout its establishment, continual development and improvement across organizations.

To support readers in taking the first, or the next, step in implementing IDEA, the following sections summarize the foundational pillars and building blocks for advancing IDEA within their organizations. Foundational pillars could be considered as the goals for IDEA and building blocks are the activities that support the foundational pillars.

It should be noted these goals are not limited to the suggestions provided here, but rather highlight the event discussion outcomes. Tools for action are detailed in Appendix D, including examples of public commitments; resources for IDEA plans and training; research; and links to networks and organizations referenced during the event.

## Foundational pillars for advancing IDEA

Several key foundational pillars were discussed for advancing IDEA and dismantling systemic barriers across workplaces (Figure 2). It should be noted these pillars are not exhaustive, and additional resources are found in Appendix D. Topics discussed in the event presented key areas for meaningful progress for IDEA in the workplace, including but not limited to, the pillars highlighted in the following sections.

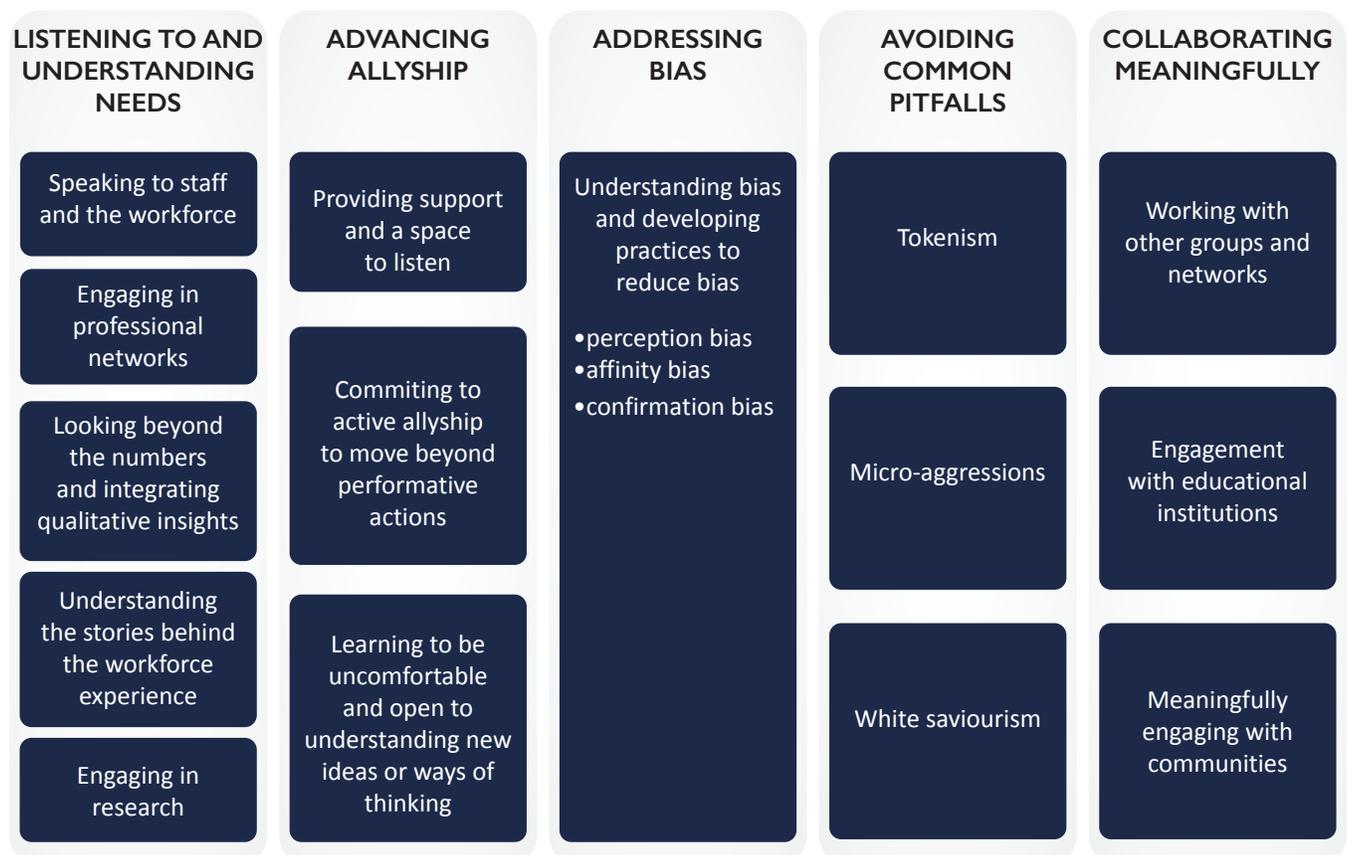


Figure 2. Key pillars for advancing IDEA in organizations



## Listening to and understanding needs

- Understanding the issues underneath the surface through communication, research, and in-depth planning is imperative for developing IDEA strategies and making meaningful changes within the sector.
- This includes making sure that diverse voices are included when making decisions and strategies.
- This also involves looking beyond the numbers and integrating qualitative insights. Although measuring progress is important, it is equally important not to put people in boxes while advancing IDEA.
- Through applying qualitative research as well as listening and understanding needs, establishing goals and measuring performance can be directed toward the root causes of exclusion in the sector and workplace.
- Existing sector research in combination with workplace-specific investigations can support making meaningful progress.

## Advancing allyship

- In the workplace, and the sector more broadly, establishing workplace environments that foster allyship is important for advancing IDEA.
- For allies, advancing IDEA can involve many activities, including but not limited to:
  - education
  - acknowledging underlying privilege
  - accepting feedback
  - being available to listen
  - making diversity a prevalent topic
  - speaking out when problems are observed
  - enabling sponsorship
  - insisting on IDEA practices in the workplace

## What is an ally?

- A person who actively seeks to learn about the challenges of a person or group of people experiencing discrimination and who works in solidarity with them to fight against oppression
- Being an ally is not simply a matter of identity; it involves taking action. Allies can take action in a variety of ways. They can advocate for the rights of those who experience discrimination or help support their needs. They can also work actively from within social, political or economic structures to challenge and eliminate oppressive policies and practices.

## Addressing bias

- Addressing underlying bias within the sector and workplace is important across all activities. Types of bias brought up during the event include perception, affinity and confirmation bias.<sup>1</sup>
- Integrating training, implementing HR practices and enabling a workplace culture that aims to address and remove bias are imperative for advancing IDEA and establishing safe workspaces.

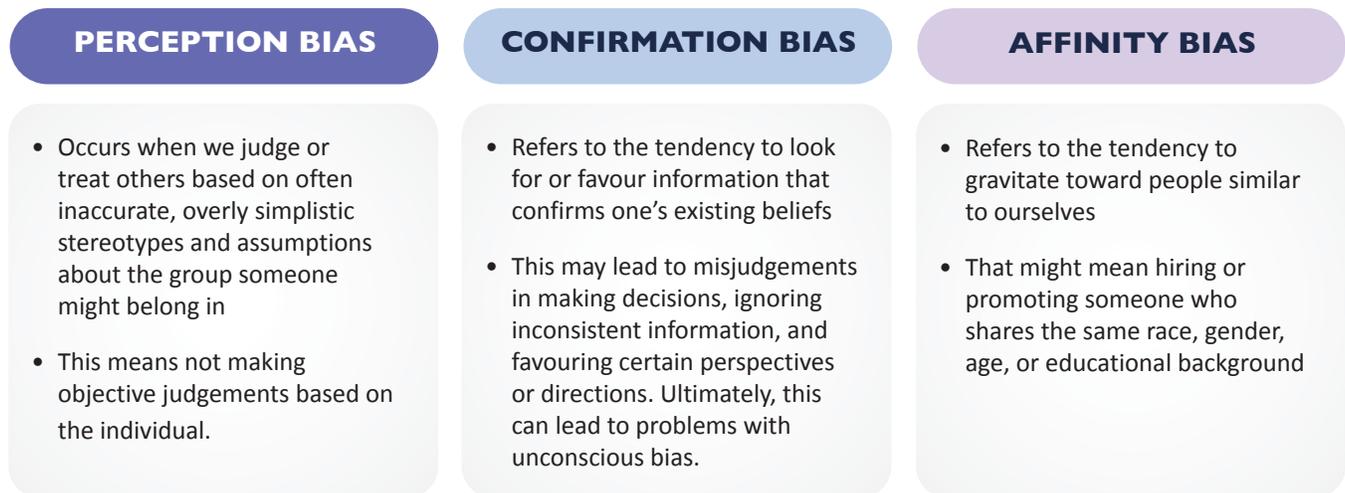


Figure 3. Types of bias to mitigate in the workplace

<sup>1</sup> Definitions are provided in Figure 3.

## Avoiding common pitfalls

- Speaker Rebecca Darwent highlighted common pitfalls, including white saviourism, micro-aggressions, and tokenism.<sup>2</sup>
- The foundational pillars and activities listed in this report present opportunities to avoid these pitfalls.
- Continual reflection and enabling workplaces that address these pitfalls are also important.

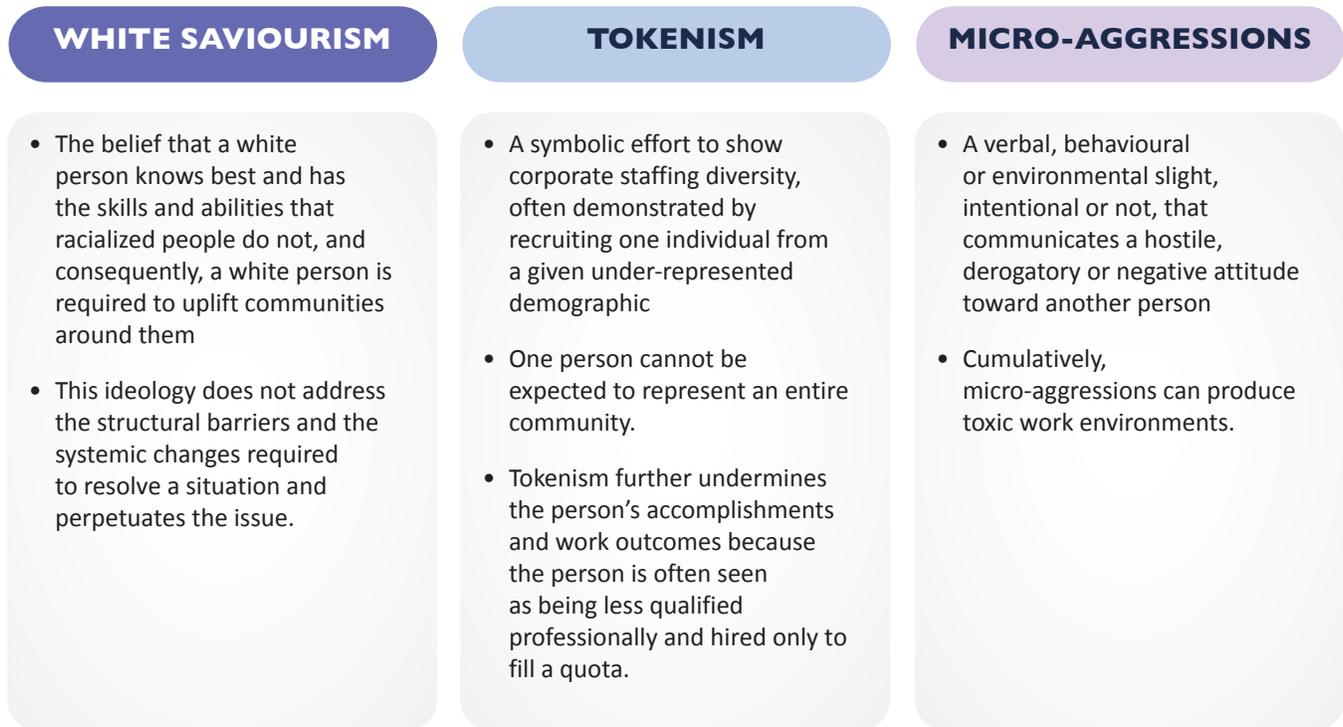


Figure 4. Three common pitfalls to avoid

## Collaborating meaningfully

- Many organizations are involved in advancing IDEA within the electricity sector. Creating meaningful partnerships and co-creating solutions can deliver broader impacts to the sector.
- Example solutions include working with external communities in developing training programs and partnering with existing organizations (e.g. Student Energy, Indigenous Clean Energy, Women in Renewable Energy) in their programming.
- These steps ensure that the voices of the communities are engaged and involved in the process of advancing IDEA within your organization.

<sup>2</sup> Descriptions are provided in Figure 4.

## Key building blocks for advancing IDEA

In alignment with the foundational pillars identified, certain actions can contribute to working toward these pillars. These actions are outlined as building blocks in this section.

Throughout the event, several participants highlighted potential action areas to advance IDEA within their respective organizations. These can include, but are not limited to, the actions summarized in Figure 5. Actions involve addressing systemic barriers and taking practical action to end certain practices and develop meaningful processes throughout the workplace (Figure 5).<sup>3</sup>



Figure 5. Building blocks and potential action areas

### Creating safe workplaces

Across sessions, discussions revolved around establishing safe workplaces through various workplace actions. A primary method is through **establishing policies and procedures**, and another is **formal training** to mitigate violence, racism, and other forms of discrimination. Additionally, this effort involves **establishing inclusive spaces, practices, supports, and policies** within the workplace. Examples of inclusive spaces can include providing a spiritual room, gender-neutral bathrooms, and breastfeeding spaces.

<sup>3</sup> More information about certain commitments is included in the presentation summaries (Appendix B) and the event tools and resources (Appendix D).

A primary condition for this work is speaking with staff to understand the current needs. Another action can be engaging with industry professionals in developing meaningful practices that meet the needs of staff and the particular workplace.

## Enabling pathways for support

Advancing IDEA in the workplace involves looking internally and externally for supporting the future workforce and advancing employees in the current workforce. For advancing candidates within the current workforce, supporting certain candidates through mentorship and sponsorship programs can provide additional pathways for career advancement, while also fostering a culture of IDEA in management levels and above.

## Establishing IDEA goals and acting on public commitments

**Establishing goals for IDEA is imperative for advancing IDEA in an organization.** An important consideration in establishing goals for IDEA within an organization is that they meet the needs of the organization. Goals can be SMART (specific, measurable, reasonable, and time-based) and holistic.

**One such method for advancing goals involves participating in transparent and public commitments for IDEA.** These public commitments involve committing to a public goal related to IDEA (e.g. gender equity by 2023) through an external organization. This effort requires senior management approval and public transparency, as well as measuring and tracking progress.

When establishing a goal for IDEA within the organization and making a public commitment, it is important that the goal aligns with the needs of the organization and that a workplace strategy is aligned with the aforementioned goal.

There are many examples of public commitments related to IDEA, such as:

- **EHRC Leadership Accord on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**
  - Organizations establish their own goals utilizing EHRC's framework.
  - Organizations can sign on as either Advocates or Signatory participants.
- **Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) [50 – 30 Challenge](#)**
  - In this challenge, organizations are asked to aspire to two goals:
    - Gender parity (50% women and/or non-binary people) on Canadian boards and/or senior management
    - Significant representation (30%) on Canadian boards and senior management of other equity-deserving groups

## Developing a plan for IDEA

Establishing an IDEA plan to meet IDEA goals **can provide a strategic vision to the IDEA process.**

The plan can include:

- strategic vision and mission for advancing IDEA
- policies and procedures to advance IDEA
- education plans
- hiring and HR plans
- measuring and reporting progress

These IDEA plans can be similar to other forms of strategic plans and provide the “map” for the IDEA process.

## Supporting career development networks

Career development networks specifically targeting under-represented groups in the **workforce provide value by connecting people and providing resources for career development.** Examples include Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE), Indigenous Clean Energy (ICE) mentorship and development programs, as well as Student Energy. Organizations can support career development networks internally by promoting them within their workforce and externally by providing financial support for these networks in their programming.

## Addressing HR practices

Addressing HR practices at the core of the organization **can reduce barriers to participation and promote advancement and recruitment.** In this process, it is crucial to recognize and change any unconscious biases that exist in the recruitment and succession planning processes of organizations. HR practices are multi-faceted and involve many elements.

Some of these ideas were covered in the event:

- Providing benefits and comprehensive packages to reduce barriers to participation in the workforce. Examples include childcare, transportation, working at home, personal days, and flexible work arrangements.
- Incorporating culturally relevant processes and Indigenous perspectives into the HR processes
- Enabling diverse hiring committees
- Establishing policies and procedures within HR to reduce bias, increase diversity, and reduce barriers in recruitment, hiring and retention processes
- Creating a process for aligning HR objectives with an overall IDEA plan
- Developing reporting and measurement processes to track change meaningfully

Although these actions were discussed throughout the event, this list is not comprehensive or exhaustive. Appendix D outlines additional resources for reference and further insights.

## Conclusions

This event brought together key sector experts to discuss elements to advance IDEA in the electricity sector workforce. Through a keynote speech, panel sessions of sector experts, and participant breakout sessions, key foundational pillars and actions were highlighted for advancing IDEA within the electricity sector.

Specifically, meaningful actions are important in developing and advancing IDEA across the sector and within the workforce. The IDEA process involves continual reflection and planning for long-term progress, while deeply understanding the core issues to be addressed. This iterative process involves understanding and addressing systemic issues and meaningfully working with communities, workforces, and participating organizations throughout the process.

Overall, this is a continuous process that greatly benefits from opportunities to share lessons learned with facilitated opportunities to apply IDEA principles at a project level, leading to organizational adoption.



# Appendix A. Key terms

**accessibility** – An overarching goal to realize a barrier-free environment through the proactive identification, removal and prevention of barriers in an organization’s policies, programs, practices and services. A barrier could include anything that hinders the full and equal participation in society regardless of their distinct identities and needs. Removing accessibility barriers ensures all members of society are fully supported and have opportunities to advance.

**disabilities** – An umbrella term covering a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible, including impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment can be in physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory function or structure. An activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action, whereas a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.

**diversity** – A term used to encompass the acceptance and respect of various dimensions of identity, including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, age, physical and mental abilities, political beliefs, or other ideologies

**duty to inquire** – Your duty to proactively ask about accommodation in a situation in which you are aware, or reasonably ought to be aware, that there may be a relationship between a disability and an individual’s job performance. In such a case, you have a “duty to inquire into that possible relationship before making a decision that would affect the person adversely. This includes providing a meaningful opportunity to the employee . . . to identify a disability and request accommodation.”<sup>4</sup>

**equity** – A condition or state of fair, inclusive and respectful treatment of all people based on their distinct identities and needs; removing systemic barriers to ensure all members are fully supported and have opportunities to advance. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

**gender** – The behavioural, cultural and psychological traits associated with an array of gender identities, including male and female, in a given society. Gender influences how people perceive themselves and each other. It refers not only to physical, psychological, behavioural and other differences. It also refers to the meanings and values society associates with male and female, that is, the idea that people have specific social roles and skills because of their sex. The term *sex* refers to a set of anatomical and physiological characteristics. However, the term *gender* refers to a social construct and goes beyond the traditional concept that there are only two genders (male and female) and that a person’s sex assigned at birth aligns with their gender identity.

**gender diverse** – This category includes people whose current gender is not reported exclusively as man or woman. It includes people who were reported as being unsure of their gender and people who were reported as both man and woman or neither man or woman.

**IDEA** – inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility

**inclusion** – The extent to which diverse members of a group (society/organization) feel valued and respected. To create and sustain a welcoming, and supportive culture that facilitates the participation, growth and development of all employees.

---

<sup>4</sup> Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission’s Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability, 2016](#)

**Indigenous** – “Indigenous” is understood to include Inuit, Métis, First Nation, Status Indian and non-Status Indian individuals or any combination thereof.

**micro-aggression** – a verbal, behavioural or environmental slight, intentional or not, that communicates a hostile, derogatory or negative attitude toward another person. Cumulatively, micro-aggressions can produce toxic work environments.

**racialized** – the process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture and politics

**tokenism** – a symbolic effort to show corporate staffing diversity, often demonstrated by recruiting one individual from a given under-represented demographic. One person cannot be expected to represent an entire community. Tokenism further undermines the person’s accomplishments and work outcomes because the person is often seen as being less qualified professionally and hired only to fill a quota.

**unconscious or implicit bias** – unconscious assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and stereotypes about different groups, preventing the fair and accurate judgement of information or people. Many researchers suggest that unconscious bias occurs automatically as the brain makes quick judgments based on past experiences and background. Certain people benefit and other people are penalized by unconscious biases. In contrast, deliberate prejudices are defined as conscious bias (or explicit bias). Although we all have biases, many unconscious biases tend to be exhibited toward minority groups based on factors such as class, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, religious beliefs, age and disability.<sup>5</sup>

**white saviourism** – the belief that a white person knows best and has the skills and abilities that racialized people do not, and consequently, a white person is required to uplift communities around them. This ideology does not address the structural barriers and the systemic changes required to resolve a situation.

---

<sup>5</sup> Vanderbilt University, Unconscious Bias and [University of Victoria, Unconscious Biases](#)

# Appendix B. Presentation summaries

## Keynote speech: *Does Canada have the workforce to keep the lights on?*

### Mark Chapeskie

Vice-president, Program Development, Electricity Human Resources Canada

#### BIOGRAPHY

Mark is vice-president of Program Development at EHRC. He has managed research and programs to transfer skills from regulated occupations into unregulated occupations while minimizing jobseeker retraining. Mark's extensive experience covers a range of skills and geographies, including sub-Saharan Africa, Taiwan, and across Canada. Mark holds a B.A. in Government from St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York, and an M.A. in Human Security and Peacebuilding from Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia. In his spare time, Mark volunteers with organizations such as the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, QuickStart Autism, and he chairs the Autism Family Advisory Committee at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

The Canadian labour force is changing. Changes in the electricity sector are being driven by three factors:

- **Technological innovation** and adoption is having an impact on nearly every occupation in the sector. We believe this impact has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Climate change** is having an impact on electricity infrastructure in two ways. The first way is the increased frequency of adverse weather events. The second way is a societal push toward and consequently, public policy moving toward a zero-carbon economy – which will of course include electrification.
- The face of the **Canadian labour force itself is changing**. The makeup of this sector demographically needs to change to keep up.

“Women make up 26% of the industry, and five years ago they made up 25%. At this rate, it will take 120 more years to reach parity.

- Mark Chapeskie

The retirement rate in the industry is 3% annually, or 1.5 times greater than the national average. Currently, recruitment is driven primarily by internal-to-the-industry methods (e.g. poaching), and thus, is unsustainable. Furthermore, this retirement is happening in the context of labour shortages across industries. In the third quarter data from Canada's 2021 labour force survey, it identified more than 1 million unfilled jobs nationwide.

As well, there are many new technical skills required to manage technological advances in the industry. Thus, a change in recruitment strategy and workforce management is necessary.

IDEA training and policies contribute to organizational continuous improvement through incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences. Population growth in Canada continues to decline. Consequently, we need to seek the skills of newcomers to Canada, Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized Canadians, people with disabilities, and other equity deserving groups and incorporate them into the sector. Longer term, there must be a focus on hiring youth by developing a talent pipeline and inspiring very young children to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

“Youth representation in the industry remains chronically low – 5% of the total labour force in the electricity industry in Canada is under the age of 25 but youth make up 14% of the labour force in all industries.

- Mark Chapeskie

## Key takeaways

- Traditional recruitment and retention practices need to change as the workforce grows in size because of policy shifts to zero-carbon emissions and Canadian demographic shifts.
- This sector is behind the broader Canadian workforce regarding participatory inclusion from under-represented groups. At the current rate of change for women's inclusion in the sector, it will take 120 years to achieve gender parity (further work needs to be done to assess transgender, Two Spirit, gender diverse and non-binary genders).
- The sector must improve to reach all demographics equitably and inclusively; not just because it is the right thing to do socially, but because it is critical for operational sustainability and growth. With almost 1 million unfilled jobs nationwide in the third quarter of 2021 and a retirement rate greater than the national average, the time for action is now.
- EHRC works to make the electricity sector appealing to the new workforce and reflect the social fabric of Canada and has developed numerous toolkits and resources to support organizations in incorporating customized IDEA policies with measurable goals. Additional tools are listed in Appendix D.
- Accommodations do not have to be costly nor onerous. Often it means a solid evaluation of current job descriptions to see where accommodations can be made to align with ability.

## Panel speaker 1. *Improving gender diversity*

### **Joanna Osawe**

President and CEO, Women in Renewable Energy

#### **BIOGRAPHY**

Joanna is the president and CEO of Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE). Joanna attended Western University, studying languages, graduating with an Honours B.A. Joanna works at Burns & McDonnell in the position of Senior Business Development Manager, End Users and EPCs. Joanna has used her language skills on a focused, 15+ year management career at leading renewable and energy sector companies in Canada and the United States. By carrying complex projects through many stages, she has seen first-hand the vital role renewable energy and emerging technologies serve in moving the Canadian, American and global energy mix forward. Recently, Joanna has been appointed to the Federal Sustainable Development Advisory Council, led by Minister Jonathan Wilkinson of Environment and Climate Change Canada. She looks forward to engaging and contributing to the council's success. The council is made up of the Canadian public that represent the views of different provinces and territories, Indigenous peoples, as well as environmental non-governmental organizations, and business and labour organizations.

As a wind developer for the first part of her career, Joanna knows all too well what it is like to be the only woman with “boots on the ground.” As a natural leader, she combines her industry knowledge to support women and address barriers to women’s advancement.

The purpose of WiRE is to advance the role and recognition of women in the energy sector. One of the greatest challenges is the lack of data tracking the percentage of women and gender diverse individuals within the sector.

However, we do know that 4.5% of skilled trade workers are women, and women make up only 32% of the energy sector globally. There are still gaps with data collection of diverse genders and, as a result, there is greater focus on the barriers women face. However, it is critical to remove barriers for all marginalized genders in the industry.



To support gender diversity in the energy sector, the solutions WiRE proposes include:

- Instilling acceptance and interest in STEM in all children from an early age
- Providing education on the role and advancement of women in the energy sector while supporting under-represented groups
- Providing networking and mentoring supports and emphasizing the importance of allies for all equity-seeking groups
- Committing to creating frameworks for accountability (e.g. EHRC’s Leadership Accord on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion). It is important to continue this effort, and WiRE does so through its national and international offices.

## **Key takeaways**

- To support gender diversity in the electricity sector, organizations can engage in networking opportunities; coaching and mentorship in the industry; and scholarships and internships to truly support all demographics
- Allyship for all under-represented groups is critical to success.
- Think globally, act locally – learn from successful case studies and continue the effort internationally, but ensure actions are applicable to the local community.

## **Panel speaker 2. *Improving accessibility for persons with disabilities***

### **Andrew Blaikie**

Leadership facilitator, Handyman, Self-employed

#### **BIOGRAPHY**

After two decades leading information technology (IT) teams, Andrew shifted his focus from tech to developing soft skills, spending the next decade as a facilitator and coach, helping organizations strengthen their leadership skills and culture. When the COVID-19 pandemic took all this work online, he reinvented himself as a handyman. And as the work landscape evolves, Andrew continues to look for meaningful part-time work that aligns with his values and the urgent issues of the day.

The term disability evokes many emotions and equally as many misconceptions that prevent inclusion. Having lived with a previously undiagnosed and invisible disability, Andrew felt additional pressure to operate in a manner that was not conducive to his health and wellness.

Previously an IT professional who enjoyed his job, Andrew discovered that he could not work in front of a computer screen for extended periods. When he realized that he had to change careers for his health, he connected with an advisor from the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW). The advisor worked with Andrew to transition his skills and experiences into a new career.

Andrew was fortunate to learn about the CCRW and work with them. Unfortunately, such services are not commonly available through routine employment supports.

It was a challenging and stressful period, but Andrew turned his experiences into valuable insights for others, and advocates for meaningful work for people living with disabilities. For people living with disabilities, flexibility and options for part-time roles can support inclusivity. Reducing the stigma around invisible disabilities and continuing daily conversations with colleagues are a few ways to facilitate including employees with.

“Where is the meaningful part-time work? There are immense benefits and rewards for both employers and employees.

- Andrew Blaikie”

## Key takeaways

- Being flexible and providing options (e.g. part-time roles) can reduce applicant barriers in your workforce.
- There are many disabilities, and invisible ones such as mental health challenges are increasing rapidly because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Normalize the conversation and destigmatize concepts of mental health and disabilities in the workplace by providing supports and enabling inclusive workspaces.
- If you believe a person requires support but are unsure how to ask, contact the [CCRW](#) or another organization specializing in disability supports that can guide you through the accommodation process.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Tool kits developed by [EHRC](#) and the [CCRW](#), as well as other resources, are in Appendix D.

## Panel speaker 3. *Improving the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to participate in the energy transition*

### **Alexandra Thomson**

Youth Mentorship Program Manager, Indigenous Clean Energy

#### **BIOGRAPHY**

Alexandra (She/Her) is a Nakoda woman mixed with French descent, belonging to Carry the Kettle (Cega'kin) First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory. She currently resides in Mohkinstsis (Calgary, Alberta), Treaty 7 Territory. Alexandra holds a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering from the University of Saskatchewan. A community-driven individual, Alexandra strives to apply her education in combination with Indigenous ways of knowing to solve issues that impact Indigenous communities as they relate to energy, infrastructure, sustainability, and socio-economics. Alexandra's goal is to empower Indigenous communities to establish sovereignty through community-based project work and capacity building initiatives. She hopes to nurture an interest in STEM amongst Indigenous women and youth, as it is her belief that Indigenous knowledge can largely contribute to an evolving holistic framework in the field that will ultimately provide meaningful, tangible, and long-lasting solutions for Indigenous communities.

Alexandra discussed the various ways in which Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous people can work together in a good way and build capacity for the clean energy transition. The Indigenous population is among the fastest growing, and youngest, in Canada.

Overall, it is important to provide opportunities, inspire growth, and rebuild trust with Indigenous Peoples.

A recent acceleration report from ICE noted that Indigenous communities have seen 29% growth in medium- to large-scale renewable energy projects over the past five years. They are investing in leadership and building capacity in alignment with their values and rights. Alexandra provided several methods that organizations can use to create meaningful experiences and capacity-building opportunities with Indigenous communities.

It is important to recognize unconscious biases that exist in the recruitment and succession planning processes of organizations. Culturally relevant processes and Indigenous perspectives can be better incorporated within these processes.

“  
Meaningful relationship building that views Indigenous people not as victims, but as equals with a vast potential to contribute to a harmonic co-existence

- Alexandra Thompson  
”

It is also imperative that organizations demonstrate an understanding and interest in issues that concern Indigenous communities. The interests of Indigenous youth should also be considered when developing career opportunities.

Through meaningful collaboration with communities, organizations can begin to foster relationships that incorporate an understanding of Indigenous lived experiences, resilience and vast potential.

For meaningful capacity-building to occur, IDEA should be considered throughout partnership plans; employment and training; and community engagement. For meaningful partnerships, Indigenous communities are seeking partners that respect their views, culture and goals, which are inherently connected to the land.

For example, environmental impact assessments need to be expanded to include community Elders. For employment and training, many Indigenous communities have a labour relations or human resources (HR) department that can coordinate with your organization to hire from the talent pool in the community. One of the largest gaps for training programs is funding, and Alexandra suggested that organizations engage with relevant training and educational organizations for support.

Indigenous communities participated in more than 197 renewable energy projects larger than 1 MW and saw 29% growth in medium to large energy projects over the past five years.

- Alexandra Thompson

## Key takeaways

- ICE offers holistic supports for Indigenous peoples and corporations through wage subsidies, equity training, and mentorship opportunities.
- Use projects to provide opportunities, inspire growth, address previous injustices and rebuild trust with Indigenous Peoples.
- Utilize Indigenous community liaisons to build trust and ensure appropriate engagement.

## Panel speaker 4. *Creating a workforce more inclusive of racialized Canadians*

### Rebecca Darwent

Co-founder, Foundation for Black Communities

#### BIOGRAPHY

A social entrepreneur, Rebecca brings a fresh perspective, catalytic approach, and an intuitive business savvy to solve long-standing issues. She is redefining the “do good” narrative by raising the voices and profiles of those who have been overlooked and undervalued – because that is where true change resides. Rebecca is a builder of relationships and capital. She has led strategy, policy, fundraising, and partnership initiatives that mobilized multimillion dollar investments in equity, health and education. Rebecca delivers results with bold generosity and increases team resilience and operational efficiency. She is a founding member of the Foundation for Black Communities, which was created to ensure the flourishing and self-determination of Black communities in Canada. In addition, she is the vice-president of Laidlaw Foundation, a Women Leaders for the World Fellow, and a Canadian Millennium Laureate.

We often think about overt and conscious racism and prejudice when we think about racist workplace practices. However, there are much more common applications of bias that still perpetuate harm. Rebecca shared how this might show up in a workplace.

Rebecca reflected on a time when she was working at a firm as a director, with a colleague who was also a director and a third team member who was a coordinator. Often in meetings together, Rebecca would receive texts from the other director to remind her to be on time. It started to become a pattern in which she felt like she was constantly being checked on. She came to a realization after the coordinator had missed a meeting, that they were being treated differently. The director had not texted the coordinator to make sure they would be on time even though the director constantly reminded Rebecca.

Rebecca realized that she was being treated differently for two reasons. The first reason was a perception bias from the other director that Black people are always late and unreliable. The second reason was an affinity bias that people that looked like *them* (like the coordinator) are reliable.

“Hiring from diverse communities is NOT *doing them a favour*; they come with assets and expertise and experience that is going to be valuable to you and your organization.

- Rebecca Darwent

”

This is the nuance of how bias shows up in the workplace. Her example illustrates how unconscious bias can appear as a tendency to process information and make unconscious associations even when we have information contrary to what we hold in our minds.

Addressing unconscious bias and systematic racism need to happen in tandem, to stop systemically excluding certain communities from candidate pools. One way this can be achieved is by redefining perceptions of Black and racialized communities through dismantling the ways we have always done things.

Organizations need to change how they are attracting, hiring, and retaining people and ensure that individuals from diverse communities are not hired or promoted in isolated cases. Such practices are tokenistic and performative. Instead, focus on their skill sets and competencies. This effort inevitably requires a level of self-awareness of individuals that developed by taking the time to investigate and reflect on ingrained perceptions and norms.

As discussed throughout the event, the energy sector is at a critical point, and there is a huge opportunity to re-examine internal practices to improve them. When doing this, we must avoid three common pitfalls: white saviourism, tokenism, and micro-aggressions (Figure 4).

## **Key takeaways**

- Take practical actions to hire and retain diverse staff.
- Realize that hiring from diverse demographics is not *doing them a favour*. They come with experience, knowledge and expertise to contribute.
- Be mindful of how your teams are interacting and of the team culture that has been cultivated.
- Be mindful not to put people in boxes and instead look at the people and the diversity among them.
- Ask yourself questions such as Is this a pre-judgment? Have I drawn unfair conclusions? Can I ask questions and learn more to see the whole person beyond their racial makeup? Then take the time to investigate and reflect on the answers.
- Pay attention to your own patterns, do the research, explore the awkwardness of asking questions, and be in a state of continuous learning.

## Panel speaker 5. *Engaging with youth in the future electricity sector workforce in Canada*

### **Helen Watts**

Senior Director, Global Partnerships, Student Energy

#### **BIOGRAPHY**

Helen is a widely recognized young advocate of clean energy and intergenerational equity, in addition to being a Forbes 30 Under 30 honouree. She founded the Global Youth Energy Outlook developed by an international team of young researchers and the first global dataset of youth perspectives on the energy transition by 2030. Helen also co-founded Greenpreneurs, a training and grant-making mechanism that has mobilized more than US\$100,000 in funding to youth-led climate enterprises. She is regularly engaged by the international community on the role of youth in the energy transition.

Climate and energy issues are of primary concern to youth, and they can play a pivotal role in the future of this sector in Canada and in addressing its issues.

There are three core components to engaging with youth and bringing them into the industry through creating more inclusive workplaces. This effort involves bridging the communications gap, addressing how we are preparing youth to advocate, and closing the skills gap. To do so, there must be a focus on engaging youth by understanding and addressing their values and implementing hiring processes that communicate with them effectively.

A recent survey of 41,000 youth found that 90% of them want decarbonization by 2050, and 82% would base their votes on this factor. Their decisions will aid the growth and sustained public support of clean energy policies.

Meaningful youth engagement is imperative to this process. Youth must be included in the conversation and their voices must truly be listened to. It is also important to empower young people to build public advocacy and support for climate smart policies that support workforce development and inclusive training and programming.

Closing the skills gap is a third core component. The skills gap prevents young people from entering the industry. Closing the skills gap will give young people the information they need to succeed in the industry.

Empowering youth is critical to growing and sustaining public support for clean energy and climate-smart policies in Canada.

- Helen Watts

Helen reflected on her own experience with Student Energy starting as a university student. Student Energy trusted Helen with a leadership role, and she was able to take on opportunities that she would not have had in other workplaces. It was a testament to barriers that young people typically face in the sector. But it also shows how Student Energy provides an example for how organizations can address barriers and give young people the trust to lead in their roles. These barriers were clear to Helen but they go even deeper for racialized young people, young people with disabilities, Indigenous young people, etc.

It is so important to look at youth engagement through an intersectional perspective and engage with a diverse group of young people. This effort includes actively engaging with people who have not always been able to access opportunities.

Helen emphasised the importance in understanding youth values. Globally, youth are interested in how organizations consider societal impact accountability and how they are addressing income inequality and systemic racism.

In Canada, these core values are similar, including addressing inequality and prioritizing equity, Indigenous voices, opportunities for youth and addressing the Just Transition. It is important to consider this in your organizations because these are the types of workplaces that youth want to be a part of.

Youth engagement is an important strategy to future-proof your workforce and go beyond tokenistic engagement. Ask yourself, how are young people currently represented? Are they equitably compensated? Are their thoughts and ideas used and followed through on? Are you engaging with diverse youth? How are you supporting mentorship? Youth councils and apprenticeships are all useful tools to assess how your workplace aligns with youth values.

With an anticipated 1.5 million new green jobs by 2030 and given the current retirement rate in this sector, successful recruitment of young people is necessary for a robust energy sector. How can we engage with youth during this time of unemployment to meet our climate goals?

Practical tools include investing in training; leveraging external research; and embedding IDEA in training and scaling programs. Build meaningful mentorship opportunities and consider if there are costs and barriers to access. Are you engaging with diverse youth? These are steps that your organization can start today and build a workplace that meaningfully includes youth voices.

## **Key takeaways**

- Provide pathways for internal growth and provide mentoring, coaching and continued education opportunities because youth are integral to strategically developed succession plans.
- Provide youth with opportunities to present ideas and opinions. This effort also requires that the youth are listened to and that their needs are addressed, instead of these being performative engagements.

# Appendix C. Breakout sessions summary

Several parallel takeaways were discussed throughout the breakout groups and are reflected in the following sections. These takeaways are reflected in and reinforced the event summary of foundational pillars and action areas.

## Takeaway 1. Embracing change and addressing challenges head-on

**A critical first step is to enable and take action on changing systems in our organizations and the broader sector.** This entails self-awareness of unconscious biases that lead to unintentional discrimination in interactions with others. Valuing the skills and contributions of all people translates into initiating courageous and supportive conversations in safe spaces to understand intersectional needs and assess current practices and outcomes. Ask questions and try to understand the “why.” A prime example is assessing job requirements to ensure they are up-to-date and reflect the current and future needs of the role. Hiring teams should consider applicants’ competencies and the value they can bring. Organizations must engage with local communities a part of their regular operations.

## Takeaway 2. Learning and establishing needs through meaningful engagement

**In building IDEA plans, it is imperative to understand needs from the perspectives of those with relevant experiences.** This effort involves ensuring that their voices are heard through a process that demonstrates valuing engagement. A critical piece is ensuring there are supports in place to compensate for and recognize that this extra effort is needed. Doing so provides another aspect through which to assess the current situation and potential roadblocks. Co-developing solutions is also imperative through this process.

If you are asking employees to participate in engagement sessions and self-identification, understand that asking for self-identification and sensitive information on their experiences may trigger previous negative experiences. If you are asking for sensitive data, it is imperative to make it optional and to be transparent about the rationale for collecting this information.

## Takeaway 3. The value of self-reflection and personal training to advance IDEA

**Develop an environment for employees to engage in self-reflection and personal training.** This effort may require amendments to the organizational culture to reflect the new processes and policies. External organizations and resources are available to support this process (Appendix D). Training that is specific to the responsibilities of the teams will be needed to ensure applicability and relevance to their operations. Other training supports include mentoring, networking and coaching. These supports ensure that organizational knowledge is disseminated in a manner that fosters trust and encourages the growth of staff.

## Takeaway 4. Looking to the future generation through collaboration and engagement

**Engagement with educational institutions at all levels is also necessary to showcase professional opportunities and develop interest in STEM fields at the earliest age.** Youth are passionate about green energy and are an under-engaged demographic in the energy transition. They are also concerned about diverse representation across all levels of the workforce. Demonstrating this must be done with care to ensure the diversity is not performative or tokenistic. Otherwise, it undermines the authority of individuals if others assume they attained their position to fill a quota, reverses advancements gained across an organization, and damages the trust of the entire team. When done properly, organizations strengthen their succession policies for optimal sustained growth.

There are also several wage subsidy programs that promote including equity-deserving groups available through EHRC and other organizations to support hiring organizations. These programs include:

- **Student Work Placement Program** (federal): Aimed at preparing students for the future of work, the program will create new work-integrated learning opportunities by providing subsidies of up to \$7,000 per student position to the employers who create these new opportunities for students from under-represented groups.
- **Youth Employment and Skills Strategy** (federal) (delivered by NRCan through the NRCan's Science & Technology Internship Program—Green Jobs): This program supports companies that provide green work experience to youth through internships and on-the-job training. This funding can subsidize an internship, a training opportunity, or a combination of both, up to \$25,000 per participant. Additional funding is available for opportunities that support youth who live furthest from employment (up to \$7,000 more).

## Takeaway 5. The importance of establishing transparent goals and indicators

**As leaders set the tone and priorities of organizations, sustained action to reach key performance indicators requires that goals are established.** Transparent and meaningful goals that address the root cause of systemic workforce issues and set a direction for an organization. Public commitments are one way for organizations to demonstrate their commitment to IDEA with established metrics to benchmark and measure against (for example, NRCan's Equal by 30 campaign and EHRC's Leadership Accord on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion).

These are public commitments by leaders, with quantifiable metrics, to ensure accountability. Signatories clearly demonstrate that their organizations are not merely engaging in performative measures but are partaking in systemic change. Another great resource is the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada 50 – 30 Challenge, which is another public commitment for organizations to signal their commitment to diversifying their workforces.

## Takeaway 6. The importance of sharing lessons learned

**Organizations are encouraged to collaborate with others to share success stories and lessons learned.** There are many ways to secure a more diverse talent pool, including accessing wage subsidy programs to help with the cost of onboarding a new recruit or intern and encouraging managers and other internal leaders to mentor younger staff. These initiatives also improve workplace culture and overall wellness by contributing to creating safe spaces where individuals can safely and effectively participate in the workplace and truly showcase their vast expertise and skills.

# Appendix D. Resources

## [Illuminate Opportunity: Equity in the Workplace](#)

Illuminate Opportunity is a comprehensive, first-of-its-kind tool kit to support developing diversity, equity and inclusion practices for employers in Alberta and beyond. It guides employers to apply a diversity and inclusion approach to recruiting, onboarding and retaining a full range of qualified individuals.

## [Leadership Accord on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

The Leadership Accord on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is a public commitment by Canadian employers, educators, unions, associations and governments. The commitment is to advance, integrate and prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion in their organization's policies, processes, culture, and workplace environment. The goal is to proactively create a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace.

Developed and launched by EHRC in 2017, the accord proposes united action to:

- expand the breadth and depth of the skilled workforce
- ensure that under-represented groups are informed of the opportunities available in the sector of their choice

Once employed, the groups are fully supported and provided with equal opportunities to grow and develop to their full potential.

The accord provides a real opportunity for all stakeholders to actively engage in building a workforce that is truly representative of every community within Canada.

## [Leadershift: Pathways to Gender Equity](#)

Leadershift: Pathways to Gender Equity explores the status of women's representation in companies across Canada's electricity sector, with a focus on the leadership level. It includes a review of the current levels of women's participation in the sector: highlights champions and successful initiatives; and offers recommendations for generating meaningful change.

## [Mentor Junction](#)

Mentor Junction is a free website that can connect mentors in the electricity industry with interested individuals. Mentors are available from across the electricity sector and across Canada. As well, diversity filters are available that allow for diverse mentees to connect with diverse mentors.

## [Equal by 30](#)

Equal by 30 is the Government of Canada's commitment to achieve parity between men and women in Canada's energy system by 2030. It is a commitment Canada has made internationally as part of the C3E Clean Energy Ministerial.

## [50 – 30 Challenge](#)

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada have initiated the 50 – 30 Challenge to Canadian organizations. The goal is to achieve gender parity and significant representation of other diverse groups on Canadian boards and senior leadership positions in for-profit, not-for-profit and other organizations nationwide.

## **NRCan programming**

[Women in Cleantech Challenge](#) – a three-year national competition that provided six women innovators with unprecedented levels of support to bring new ideas and diversity of thought to realize new technological solutions

Clean energy in Indigenous, rural and remote communities was gifted the sacred name Wah-ila-toos. Funding is being delivered through federal programs such as

- [Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program](#) – supports community-led clean energy projects that reduce reliance on diesel fuel for heat and power while also creating jobs
- [Indigenous Off-Diesel Initiative](#) – supports Indigenous communities in developing and implementing ambitious plans to reduce diesel use for heat and power

[Science and Technology Internship Program – Green Jobs](#) – provides funding to eligible employers to hire and mentor youth in the natural resources sector, including in energy, forestry, mining, earth science, and clean technology

[Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways Program](#) – supports increased Indigenous involvement and ownership of clean energy projects and encourages the participation of other under-represented groups in the renewable energy sector

## **Youth servicing**

The following resources are related to the value that youth can bring to an organization. They also offer advice about how to successfully recruit, integrate and retain youth employees.

### **Youth programming and cohorts**

- [Student Energy programs](#)
- [WiRE student chapters](#)
- [ICE](#), [Generation Power](#) and [Imagination](#)

### **Youth-led dialogues**

- [Global Youth Energy Outlook](#)
- [Deloitte Global Gen Z and Millennial Survey](#)
- [Davos Lab: Youth Recovery Plan](#)

### **Other resources**

- [EHRC Skill savvy](#)
- [Future Ancestors Services Inc.](#)
- [Policy Brief: Tackling the COVID-19 youth employment crisis](#)

## **SUPPORTIVE RESOURCES**

The following resources were shared with participants in case anyone had an emotional response to any of the items discussed.

**[opencounseling.com](http://opencounseling.com)**

Free telephone counseling hotlines in Canada, providing support in suicide and crisis; alcohol and substance abuse; domestic and sexual violence; eating disorders; 2SLGBTQIA+ supports; sexual health and pregnancy; youth and parenting; and other specific disorders

**Crisis text line or Text CONNECT to 686868**

**Assaulted Women's Helpline**

Monday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., **1-866-863-0511** or TTY **1-866-863-7868**

