

Wednesday, December 2, 2026
12 – 6 p.m.
New Donald K. Johnson Centre, 100 King St W, Suite 129, First Canadian Place

Host
Ivey Business School, Western University, Ontario

Organizers
Erik Bohlin, Ivey Chair in Telecommunication Economics, Regulation and Policy, and Romel Mostafa, Director, Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management, Ivey Business School

Schedule **subject to change*

Time	Location
12:00 – 12:45 p.m.	**Buffet Lunch**
12:50 – 1:00 p.m.	**Welcome Remarks** Romel Mostafa, Director, Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management, Ivey Business School
1:00 – 1:10 p.m.	**Canada's "AI for All"** (Video Remarks) The Honourable Evan Solomon, Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency of Southern Ontario
1:10 – 1:30 p.m.	**Building Mission-Oriented Networks: How Can Canada Build Faster and at Scale?** Sonia Sennik, Chief Executive Officer, Creative Destruction Lab
1:30 – 1:50 p.m.	**A Converging or Diverging Digital Future Under Geopolitical Stress?** Johannes Bauer, Professor & Director, Quello Center, Michigan State University, formerly Chief Economist, Federal Communications Commission
1:50 – 2:10 p.m.	**Resilient by Design: Quantum Technologies and Satellite Connectivity for Canada's Digital Networks** Georg Serentschy, Managing Partner, Serentschy Advisory Services, Austria
2:10 – 2:30 p.m.	**Sovereignty by Design? The European Framework for Digital Infrastructre, AI, Cloud and Public Procurement: Implications for Canada** Carlo Cambini, Professor, Politecnico di Torino, Italy
2:30 – 2:50 p.m.	**Global Lessons on Spectrum, Scale and Investment** Pau Castells, Director, GSMA Intelligence, Barcelona
2:50 – 3:10 p.m.	**Coffee Break**
3:10 – 3:30 p.m.	**Keynote** Kara Beckles, Assistant Deputy Minister, Artificial Intelligence, Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement, Ontario

3:30 – 3:55 p.m.	**Panel: Charting Canada's Policy Priorities on AI and Digital Infrastructure** Vass Bednar, Managing Director, Canadian SHIELD Institute Salim Teja, Partner, Radical Ventures Romel Mostafa (Moderator)
3:55 – 4:10 p.m.	**Budget 2026: Will the Big Bet on Investment-Led Growth Pay Off?** Mahmood Nanji, Power Corporation of Canada Fellow, Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management, Ivey Business School
4:10 – 4:35 p.m.	**Panel: Perspectives by Industry** Andrew Lockhart, Director, Government and Public Affairs, TeleSat Omair Shah, Vice President, Telus Sohayla Praysner (Moderator)
4:35 – 4:55 p.m.	**Implications for Canada** Noah Moser, Acting Director General, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
4:55 – 6:00 p.m.	**Closing Remarks & Networking Reception**

Speakers



Johannes Bauer is a researcher, writer, teacher, and academic entrepreneur. He is interested in the digital economy next-generation media. His position as Quello Chair for Media and Information Policy facilitates the pursuit of rigorous and actionable research. From September 2023 through December 2024, he was on leave from MSU to serve as the Chief Economist in the Office of Economics and Analytics (OEA) of the U.S. Federal Communications Commission in Washington, DC. Educated as an engineer and social scientist, he obtained advanced degrees in economics from the Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria. Michigan State University has been his home institution since 1990. He had the privilege to spend extended times affiliated with Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands (2000-2001), the University of Constance, Germany (Summer 2010), and the University of Zurich, Switzerland (2012).



Michèle Beck is Telesat's Senior Vice President, Canadian Sales responsible for both Enterprise, Government and Broadcast sales in Canada. Ms. Beck joined Telesat in 1987 where she began her career in engineering, developing new products in digital video compression, HDTV and direct-to-home satellite services. She was then hired by the Canadian Cable Telecommunications Association serving as their Vice President Technology. In 2006, Ms. Beck returned to Telesat as Director, Engineering responsible for all satellite service offerings including R&D, enterprise, broadband and broadcast. She soon was appointed Director, North American Enterprise and Government Sales where she built an impressive record enabling Telesat customers to achieve operational efficiencies and meet other business goals by applying her expertise in technical, commercial and regulatory matters. Promoted to her current position in 2013, Ms. Beck holds a BA Sc., Electrical Engineering from the University of Ottawa.



Kara Beckles is Assistant Deputy Minister, Artificial Intelligence at the Ontario Public Service. She was appointed in October 2026. She was previously Executive Director within the Privacy and Responsible Data Division at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS). As an active and experienced data leader in the Government of Canada, Kara has held various executive positions across the public service, including Chief Data Officer and Director General of Data and Information Services at the Privy Council Office (PCO), Director General of Data Integration in PCO's Result and Delivery Unit, and Chief Economist at Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. She has also held various strategic, policy and analytical roles at Finance Canada, Treasury Board Secretariat, Statistics Canada, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and PCO. Kara holds a Bachelor of Arts in economics and business from the University of Winnipeg and a Master of Arts in economics from Dalhousie University.



Vass Bednar is the Managing Director of SHIELD. Recognized as one of Canada's sharpest policy minds, she is known for cutting through corporate jargon and bureaucratic inertia to ask the questions others won't. With a career spanning think tanks, government, academia and media, Vass has built a reputation as a fearless and independent voice on the policies that shape our daily lives. In 2020, she co-founded the Master of Public Policy in Digital Society program at McMaster University, where she also taught courses on policy design. Vass is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation, a Fellow at the Public Policy Forum and an advisor to both the Canadian Anti-Monopoly Project and Social Capital Partners. She is the co-author of *The Big Fix: How Companies Capture Markets and Harm Canadians* and writes for the *The Globe and Mail*'s Report on Business.



Erik Bohlin is Professor and Chair in Telecommunication Economics, Policy and Regulation at the Ivey Business School. He is an expert in telecommunications policy, an inter-disciplinary topic concerned with the impact of digitalization in the economy and society. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Telecommunications Policy*, a premier journal in the field. He is on leave as Professor at Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden. His graduate degree is in Business Administration and Economics at the Stockholm School of Economics (1987) and his Ph.D. is from Chalmers University of Technology (1995). He is a Member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Engineering, and Past Chair of the International Telecommunications Society, an inter-disciplinary professional society convening conferences on the evolving digital society and policy needs.



Carlo Cambini is Full Professor of Industrial Organization in the Department of Industrial Management at the Politecnico di Torino, Italy. He earned a Ph.D in Public Economics from Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Pisa, Italy. He received the Young Economist Essay Award at the 2000 EARIE conference in Losanne (CH). His research focuses on industrial economics, regulatory economics and competition policy with a strong background in telecommunications, transportation, energy markets, and the Internet. He is economic member of the Scientific Committee of the Florence School of Regulation – Communications and Media, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies – European University Institute (EUI), Florence.



Pau Castells leads the economic research department of GSMA Intelligence. He is responsible for the publication of high-profile economic research on telecommunications and digital infrastructure and services, playing an active role in setting the economic position and rationale for the mobile industry across key industry topics. Before joining the GSMA, Pau worked as an economist in the financial sector and several UK government departments, specialising in the economic analysis of public policy and regulation in the energy, ICT, and digital sectors. Aside from economic research, he makes regular public speaking engagements with the media. Pau holds a Ph. D. in Economics from the Autonomous University of Barcelona.



Andrew Lockhart is the Director of Government Relations and Public Affairs at Telesat, one of the world's largest and most successful global satellite operators. He currently spends the majority of his time working on Telesat Lightspeed, the largest space project in Canada's history. Prior to joining Telesat he spent over a decade with the Canadian Bankers Association where he led the industry's federal government relations efforts. He graduated from Queen's University in 2011 with a Bachelor or Arts (Honours) in Politics and History and was a member of the inaugural MPM cohort.



Noah Moser is the acting Director General of Costing and Regulatory Implementation in the Telecommunications Sector at the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. He is responsible for Canada's 9-1-1 framework, dispute resolution and the financial costing of telecommunications services. In his previous role of Director, Broadband and Network Technology, he advanced the CRTC's efforts to fund improvements to Internet and cellphone service in Indigenous, rural and remote communities in Canada. He developed the CRTC's telecommunications resiliency framework and was also responsible for advising the CRTC on technology issues related to the telecommunications industry. In previous roles, Noah was responsible for the framework for emergency alerting and led analysis of economic and technical matters primarily related to the broadcasting system at the CRTC. Noah has a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering from Carleton University.



Romel Mostafa is an Assistant Professor of Business, Economics and Public Policy at the Ivey Business School. Romel's areas of research and expertise include strategy & capability development in new firms, innovation & competitive dynamics, industrial evolution & policy, as well as behavioural decision-making. He has published in several leading academic journals, including Academy of Management Journal, Journal of Behavioral Decision Making, Journal of Risk & Uncertainty, Organization Science and Management Science. His research and commentaries have been featured in global media outlets such as CNN, NPR and the New York Times. Romel has taught both at graduate and undergraduate levels, and received several teaching awards. He obtained his PhD and MSc from Carnegie Mellon University, and BA from Lawrence University. As the Director of Ivey's Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management, Romel spearheads the Centre's research, outreach and teaching initiatives. The Centre advocates for sound policy and corporate action towards unlocking national competitive advantage, by focusing on critical challenges and opportunities around digital, trade and social infrastructural pillars.



Mahmood Nanji is a Power Corporation of Canada Fellow at the Lawrence National Centre for Policy and Management at Ivey Business School. Previously, Mahmood served as the Director of the Lawrence Centre from 2018-2019. Prior to joining Ivey, he was an Associate Deputy Minister at the Ontario Ministry of Finance. Over the course of his public service career, Mahmood has held senior executive positions with the Ministries of Finance, Economic Development and Trade, Energy, Public Infrastructure Renewal and Cabinet Office. Mahmood has led some of the government's highest priority initiatives, including, designing and implementing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, leading the second largest tax administration in Canada, and serving as the provincial lead on the restructuring of General Motors and Chrysler. He also spent nearly 10 years with the federal government in Ottawa.



Sohayla Praysner is a customer-focused industry leader who has built partnerships with Canadian Service Providers throughout her career. Most recently, Sohayla was Country Manager, Canada at Intelsat, who operates the world's largest integrated satellite-terrestrial network. Prior to that, Sohayla held several leadership roles at Cisco Canada, Alcatel-Lucent and Nortel Networks. Her telecom career began at Bell Canada as a Network Engineer, and she has since led significant initiatives enabling large scale deployments of transformational technologies across Canada. Sohayla is a Professional Engineer and a graduate of the University of Toronto's Electrical Engineering program. She enjoys being involved with leading edge communication technologies that allow people to live, work and interact seamlessly across multiple, integrated terrestrial and non-terrestrial networks. Sohayla remains engaged with Engineering and Business programs and students at Canadian universities, as a coach and mentor to the next generation of professionals who will shape the future of the country.



Sonia Sennik is the Chief Executive Officer of Creative Destruction Lab (CDL), a seed-stage program for massively scalable, science-based companies. Sonia is responsible for the CDL's strategic, operational and programmatic leadership, coordination and oversight to ensure the success of the Lab and its ventures across sixteen university-based locations. Sonia was the Executive Director of the CDL Rapid Screening Consortium, a not-for-profit organization focused on developing a cost-effective system for reopening the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sonia is a proud graduate of the MBA program at Rotman School of Management — the first-ever recipient of the Social Impact Award — and holds a Bachelor of Engineering Physics from McMaster University.



Georg Serentschy advises C-level and top experts in the digital sector (platforms, telecommunications, media, and technology) on strategy, regulation & competition, spectrum policies, cybersecurity policies and innovation. A prime focus of his advisory work is the strategic positioning of companies in a specific regulatory environment. Georg's professional career spans more than 40 years. It began in nuclear physics, after which he turned to industrial research and development in various high-tech industrial areas such as software development, solar energy, aerospace, and telecommunications. After his career in industry, he joined Arthur D. Little, a strategy consulting firm. Then, for over a decade, he headed up the Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications in Austria (RTR-GmbH). The highlight of Georg's regulatory career was chairing and vice-chairing BEREC (Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications). In 2014, he founded his consulting boutique, focused on advising C-suite and top digital sector experts on strategy, artificial intelligence, regulation & competition, spectrum policy, cybersecurity policy and innovation. In parallel, he continues to work with leading consultancies on a project basis.



Omair Shah is Vice President, Corporate Strategy at TELUS. He leads strategic portfolio development activities for TELUS Ventures and works closely with senior executives to help determine priority investment areas and ensure that active opportunities are in alignment with the broader organization. He also plays a key role in the success of TELUS Ventures' portfolio companies, working closely with founders and executives on value creation initiatives and helping them scale. Previously, he was a consulting leader at a top-tier firm, having worked on a diverse set of engagements for large, multi-billion dollar clients in the TMT space (Tech, Media, Telco).



Salim Teja is a Partner with Radical Ventures where he leads the firm's Impact Team. Radical Ventures is an early-stage venture capital firm investing in entrepreneurs applying deep technology to transform massive industries. With a primary focus on machine learning and artificial intelligence, Radical Ventures partners with exceptional entrepreneurs to build enduring global companies. Salim brings over 20 years of experience in the technology sector as an entrepreneur, venture investor, corporate innovator and innovation ecosystem builder. Prior to Radical Ventures, Salim served as President, Venture Services for MaRS Discovery District, one of the world's largest urban innovation centres.