

PROGRAM

2025 First Nations Energy Symposium: Indigenous Power, Partnerships and Possibilities— Celebrating Indigenous Leadership in Shaping a Sustainable Energy Future

November 20–21, 2025



Territory Acknowledgement

Toronto has long been a cultural crossroads and homeland of various peoples and Nations. The Wendat, Attawandaron, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinabek have lived here at various times. The origin of the name Toronto is attributed to the Kanien'keha/Mohawk word Tkaron:to, which means “tree in the water there,” referring to the ancient fishing weirs situated between Lakes Simcoe and Couchiching which is reached by the Carrying-Place trail and Humber River. This river was called by the French the Rivière Toronto, and the French forts in the area were known as Fort Toronto.

Currently, Indigenous peoples of many First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities make this their home and care for its lands. The Mississaugas of the Credit entered Treaty 13; the Six Nations, allied with the British, settled in the Haldimand Tract on the Grand River; and other First Nations entered the Williams Treaties.

Cover image:

Within the Buffalo, courtesy of Andrew Wigwas. All rights reserved.

Artist's statement

Within the buffalo's body reside a fish, a turtle, and two birds—each representing different elements of life and relationship. The turtle, capable of living in both water and on land, symbolizes the meeting point between the physical and the spiritual, while the fish speaks to the deep, unseen currents of connection beneath the surface. The birds, one feeding the other, represent care, guidance, and the cycle of giving—further grounding the piece in themes of kinship. Above them all, the sun and moon hang together, reminding us of the balance between day and night, masculine and feminine, seen and unseen.

Through a seamless flow of bold and soft lines, *Within the Buffalo* weaves land, water, and sky into one unified image—each element interdependent, each life connected. This work invites the viewer to reflect not just on the natural world, but on the quiet ways we are all held together through relationship.

View Andrew's work on Instagram @awaprints.

Message from Lesley Gallinger President and CEO, Independent Electricity System Operator



Lesley Gallinger
President and Chief
Executive Officer at
Independent Electricity
System Operator (IESO)

She: kon, Aannin, Boozhoo

Welcome to the Independent Electricity System Operator's (IESO) 9th annual First Nations Energy Symposium.

Each year, this event provides an opportunity for Indigenous communities and members of the IESO leadership team to come together, strengthen relationships, and exchange knowledge in the spirit of collaboration.

The theme of this year's Symposium, *"Indigenous Power, Partnerships, and Possibilities – Celebrating Indigenous Leadership in Shaping a Sustainable Energy Future,"* reflects the essential role First Nation communities play in the energy sector. Through the development of major projects, you are helping to build a clean, modernized grid. By sharing your knowledge of the land, you are ensuring energy projects are designed for long-term success. And by partnering with industry, you are unlocking opportunities that not only support the electricity system, but overall economic resilience and prosperity.

As we work to expand Ontario's energy systems to drive economic growth and help communities thrive, we must also support

First Nation leadership in the sector by ensuring your communities have the tools and resources they need to make informed decisions about how energy is generated, distributed, and consumed.

The current push to expand our infrastructure will require us to build new transmission lines, invest in emerging technologies, and develop new sources of generation. This work depends on strong First Nation leadership and partnerships that are grounded in respect for Indigenous rights.

Over the next two days, I look forward to hearing your thoughts and perspectives on how we can work together to ensure all voices are heard as we build out a reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity system for us all.

Sincerely,

Lesley Gallinger

Ontario Energy Network Indigenous Energy Scholarship Recipients for 2025

Congratulations to Aiden Dillon and Remington Clark for receiving the 2025 Ontario Energy Network Indigenous Energy Scholarship.

This scholarship is jointly sponsored by the IESO and the Ontario Energy Network. Aiden is a second-year Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering student at the University of Calgary. Aiden says a career in power systems and distribution would allow him to solve

meaningful problems that directly impact communities, industry and the future of clean energy.

Remington is a third year Engineering Technology student at Confederation College. Remington is interested in the field of mechatronics and automation who says this scholarship will help him focus on his education and motivate him to give back to his community.

Day 1 Agenda

8:00 am – 9:00 am	EVENT DESK/LOBBY Registration and Breakfast
9:00 am – 9:45 am	Opening Ceremony PRESENTERS Stan Wesley , Kahnekahnekahtahk Luana Shirt , Culture Keeper, Red Sky Performance Councillor Larry Sault , Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation PERFORMANCES Smoketrail Singers Red Sky Performance
9:45 am – 10:00 am	Opening Remarks PRESENTER Honourable Stephen Lecce , Minister of Energy and Mines
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Welcome Remarks and Introduction of Keynote Speaker PRESENTERS Lesley Gallinger , President and CEO, Independent Electricity System Operator Tom Heintzman , Managing Director & Vice Chair, Energy Transition and Sustainability, CIBC Capital Markets
10:15 am – 10:45 am	Keynote Speaker: Roberta Jamieson PRESENTER Roberta Jamieson, O.C., I.P.C., LLB, LLd (Hon) , Director, RBC, Deloitte Canada and Chile, Former President & CEO, Indspire
10:45 am – 11:15 am	EXHIBITOR HALL Break: Networking
11:15 am – 12:15 pm	Panel Discussion: Looking Ahead to Canada's Future Energy Mix As Canada reimagines its energy future, Indigenous Nations are shaping the power generation landscape and making choices that will shape our energy mix for years to come. This panel brings together leaders from utilities, community-owned power, and advocacy organizations to discuss how Northern, remote, and off-grid communities will drive the transition to sustainable, sovereign energy systems. INTRODUCTION Marsha Roote , Indigenous Community Engagement Lead, Bruce Power MODERATOR Karen McCarthy , Vice President, Communications and Government Relations, Fortis Inc. PRESENTERS Skye Anderson , Director Indigenous Partnerships, Business Development, Ontario Power Generation Margaret Kenequanash , CEO, Wataynikaneyap Power Emily He , Manager, Renewables in Remote Communities, Pembina Institute Mikayla Woodward , Project Advisor, First Nations Power Authority

Day 1 Agenda

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to view bios



12:15 pm – 1:30 pm	BALLROOM & EXHIBITOR HALL Lunch and Connect
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1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Panel Discussion: Consent is not a Checkbox**

Despite frequent references to consultation and consent, many Indigenous communities remain excluded from early, informed decision-making. This session unpacks how Free, Prior, and Informed Consent is being applied—or misapplied—in energy and infrastructure projects. Drawing on recent legislation like Bill C-5 and Ontario's Bill 5, panelists will explore practical gaps, legal interpretations, and what meaningful consent really requires.

MODERATOR

Damien Côté, Chief Commissioner, Ontario Energy Board

PRESENTERS

Grand Council Chief Linda Debassige, Anishinabek Nation Grand Council

Chief Bruce Achneepineskum, Marten Falls First Nation

Erika Oaklander, JFK Law

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	EXHIBITOR HALL Break: Networking
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3:00 pm – 4:00 pm **Panel Discussion: Deals that Deliver**

As Indigenous communities increasingly pursue equity stakes in energy and infrastructure projects, the need for strong internal governance, risk management, and negotiation readiness has never been greater. This panel explores how Nations can structure major project partnerships to ensure long-term benefit, maintain control, and protect community priorities.

MODERATOR

Jaime Lickers, Senior Vice-President, Indigenous Markets, CIBC

PRESENTERS

Alena Thouin, Chief Strategy and Operations Officer, Building Ontario Fund

Justin Lok, Director, Investments, Canada Infrastructure Bank

Valerie Helbron, Partner, Torys LLP

Matthew Jackson, Vice President Indigenous Partnerships & Business Development, Hydro One

4:00 pm – 4:15 pm **Closing Remarks**

PRESENTER

Kevin Berube, Director, Indigenous Relations, IESO

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

Red Sky Performance

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm	BALLROOM & EXHIBITOR HALL Evening Social
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An informal evening gathering to continue conversations and connect with fellow attendees in a relaxed setting. Light refreshments will be provided.

Day 2 Agenda

8:00 am – 8:45 am	EVENT DESK/LOBBY Registration and Breakfast
8:45 am – 9:00 am	Morning Blessing WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION Carla Y. Nell , Executive Vice-President, Corporate Relations, Engagement and Strategy, IESO PRESENTER Miskwaa Animkii Bnesii , Traditional Knowledge Carrier, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
9:00 am – 9:45 am	Keynote: Building a Sustainable Future – Economic and Environmental Reconciliation INTRODUCTION Jaimie Lickers , Senior Vice-President, Indigenous Markets, CIBC PRESENTER Perry Bellegarde , Former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Q&A
9:45 am – 10:30 am	Panel: The NIES in Action: Aligning Local Priorities with a National Indigenous Energy Vision The National Indigenous Electrification Strategy (NIES) is Canada's first Indigenous-led roadmap to accelerate clean power development, expand transmission, and ensure Indigenous Nations lead in the build out of clean electricity infrastructure. This panel explores how Indigenous Nations can align local priorities with the NIES to strengthen energy sovereignty, secure equitable ownership, and shape the future of Canada's electricity system. MODERATOR Matt Jamieson , President and CEO, Six Nations Development Corporation PRESENTERS Saga Williams , Senior Advisor, First Nations Major Project Coalition Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler , Nishnawbe Aski Nation Chief Kahsennenhaweh Sky-Deer , former Grand Chief of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Pat Chilton , Former Chief Executive Officer, Five Nations Energy Inc.
10:30 am – 11:00 am	EXHIBITOR HALL Break: Networking
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Community-Led Pathways to Small Scale Renewables This session will spotlight Indigenous communities that are actively invested in renewable energy solutions. Speakers will share real project experiences: what made them possible, what barriers they faced, and how these efforts align with long-term visions of energy sovereignty. MODERATOR Beverly Nollert , Senior Director, Power System Planning, IESO PRESENTERS Cadmus Delorme , Former Chief of Cowessess First Nation, Founder and Partner – OneHoop Advisory Services & Flowing River Capital Group Jim Tait , Senior Director, Energy, Batchewana First Nation Sean Brennan , Energy Coordinator, Haida Gwaii and Wah-ila-toos Indigenous Council member

Day 2 Agenda

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12:00 pm – 1:15 pm **BALLROOM & EXHIBITOR HALL**
Lunch

1:15 pm – 2:15 pm **Panel: The Future of Energy Leadership from Tribal Councils**

Tribal Councils play a vital role in shaping the future of Indigenous energy leadership. This panel will explore how councils are driving local-to-regional energy planning, advancing partnerships, and supporting member Nations in pursuing sovereignty, capacity building, and clean energy development.

MODERATOR

Vicki Blanchard, Blanchard and Associates

PRESENTERS

Tara Ingram, Director of Economic Development, Matawa First Nations Management

Chief Russell Wesley, Vice-Chair, Windigo First Nations Council and Chief of Cat Lake First Nation

Kevin Woods, Director of Energy Services, North Shore Mi'kmaq Tribal Council

2:15 pm – 2:45 pm **EXHIBITOR HALL**
Break: Networking

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm **Panel: Connecting with Community Energy Champions**

This panel will bring together four Community Energy Champions (CECs) leading innovative projects in areas such as renewable generation, conservation, and energy efficiency. Speakers will spotlight community-led solutions, sharing stories that highlight their roles, their areas of greatest impact and learning, and possibilities for the future of CECs in today's evolving energy landscape.

MODERATOR

Dawn Lambe, Economic Policy Analyst, Anishinabek Nation

PRESENTERS

Brooke McLeod, Community Energy Champion, Moose Cree First Nation

Joseph Nahwegahbow, Community Energy Champion, Whitefish River First Nation

Vincent Galea, Community Energy Champion, Zhichgewnan Maandoonaanan – Economic Development Department, Nipissing First Nation

3:45 pm – 4:30 pm **Closing Remarks and Ceremony**

PRESENTERS

Stan Wesley, Kahnekahnekahtahk

Miskwaa Animkii Bnesii, Traditional Knowledge Carrier, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

PERFORMANCES

Red Sky Performance

Smoketrail Singers

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