

## R3: Accelerating AI Innovation Speaker Biographies

### Keynote

- **Nora Young, Host of CBC Radio's Spark, Author of The Virtual Self**

Nora Young is an informed and ideal guide for anyone looking to examine — and plan for — the ever-changing, high-tech landscape. As the host and creator of Spark, CBC's national radio show and podcast about technology and culture, and the author of *The Virtual Self*, Young demystifies technology and explains how it is shaping our lives, as well as the larger world around us. She helps audiences understand trends in big data, new technologies, machine learning, and more.



- **Audrey Ancion, Leader, AI Institute, Deloitte Canada**

Audrey leads Deloitte Canada's AI Institute and the AI Academy offering. She focuses on the strategy, process and people dimension of analytics and artificial intelligence and assists private and public sector organizations in structuring, building and strengthening their data and analytics capabilities. Audrey has experience assisting over 50 organizations getting started with their AI program and upskilling over 1,000 Canadian executives and 600 professionals on data, analytics and AI applied to solve business problems and seize new opportunities. Audrey is passionate about sharing lessons learned and has led the research and development of four Deloitte publications including "The key to delivering analytics advantage: Your people", "Building world-class analytics teams that deliver results", "Upskilling in the age of AI" and more recently "Artificial Intelligence for Social Good".



## Panel Discussion: What does the labour market have to do with AI?

- **Michele Fash, Director Business Development, ACENET**

Michele has been in the marketing field for 30 years, her work spanning both the public and private sectors and a variety of industries. Along the way, she's worked in Public Affairs with the Department of National Defence in Ottawa. She's marketed fries for McCain Foods (Canada), sand and gravel for Nova Scotia's Shaw Group Ltd. and medical devices for Uplift Technologies. She's also done private consulting with organizations ranging from start-ups to large nationals. With an MBA from Dalhousie University, Michele has been with ACENET since 2013 and is responsible for business development and marketing.



- **Cathy Simpson, CEO, TechImpact**

Cathy Simpson is an Atlantic Canadian IT leader who has dedicated her career to building the region's tech capacity. Most recently, she was the Vice President, People and Culture with T4G Limited, one of the largest privately held IT firms in the region with clients throughout North America. Cathy is a leader in the movement to use technology and innovation to drive economic growth, create thriving communities and engage citizens. She champions this evolution as Chair of the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation, an independent, not-for-profit corporation that invests in new growth-oriented companies and applied research activities. Her current work is an extension of her role as one of the co-founders of PropelICT, Atlantic Canada's original tech accelerator, and she continues to mentor and advise start-up entrepreneurs in the region. As CEO of TechImpct, Cathy is spearheading a province-wide initiative to train, attract and retain IT professionals in a partnership with the McKenna Institute, the department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour and a number of private sector partners.



- **Lilia Jemai, National AI Program Manager, Mitacs**  
Lilia Jemai, National Artificial Intelligence Manager at Mitacs. She is responsible for Mitacs' AI strategy, large-scale projects and strategic accounts. She holds 3 research Master's degrees and 12 years of experience in data valorization, artificial intelligence and decision support technologies, including 9 years in research and higher education. She also has 6 years of expertise and experience in innovation and artificial intelligence consulting.



## Panel: The Opportunity for Start-ups and SMEs in Artificial Intelligence

- **Norm Couturier, CEO, Terri Earth Intelligence**  
I am currently the President, CEO, and co-founder of Terris Earth Intelligence, a Fredericton-based geospatial technology company. Terris is developing the next era of earth intelligence platform with the world's most advanced 3D visualization of air, land and sea. A 30-year serial entrepreneur, I've co-founded 8 previous tech companies and have had 3 exits to Fortune 500 and TSX 100 companies. My companies have employed 100's of NB citizens in high-tech roles in the healthcare, logistics and geospatial tech sectors. As part of the social responsibility goal of Terris, we are a certified B Corporation, a member of 1% for the Planet, we have committed to 3 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs #8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, #9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, #11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities). I am a strong community advocate for emerging talent development with our regional universities and community colleges, and for diversity and immigration. My community volunteer work involves being an active mentor for start-up entrepreneurs and companies in our local tech ecosystem. I have volunteered hundreds of hours to help develop our start-up ecosystem and create talent attraction for our region.



- **Greg Picot, President & COO, Eigen Innovations Inc.**

Greg is President & COO of Eigen Innovations Inc., a leading provider of AI-enabled vision+data solutions for industrial manufacturing. Based in Fredericton, Greg and the Eigen teamwork with global Tier 1 companies helping them adopt and scale AI directly into their manufacturing processes. He has an extensive background in technology management, working in IT consulting, large enterprise, and startup environments, including NB startup Radian6 which was acquired by Salesforce in 2012.



- **Dr. Kenneth Kent,**

Dr. Kenneth Kent obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Victoria (Victoria, Canada) in 2003, his M.Sc. from the same in 1999, and his B.Sc. from Memorial University (Newfoundland, Canada) in 1996. He is a co-founder of anessa, a software company that provides digital twinning solutions for the biogas industry, and also a Computer Science professor at UNB, Fredericton. As a co-founder of anessa, Dr. Kent has filled roles as Chief Product Officer, Vice-President Funding & Investments, and Board member while leveraging his skills and connections garnered from his academic role to help grow anessa. His research interests include high-performance/cloud computing, embedded systems, software engineering, and managed runtimes. In his academic career he has been engaged in many industrial partnerships including IBM, Google, RedHat and Huawei.

This work has contributed to disclosures & patent filings, many academic publications in refereed journals and conference proceedings, and various awards for his scientific contributions.



- **Mohamed Adel, East BIM/VDC Manager, Bird Construction**

Mohamed Adel is currently the East BIM/VDC Manager for Bird Construction, where he oversees the Digital Transformation and implementation of BIM/VDC in Bird Eastern region. Mohamed has a combined 12+ years of comprehensive experience in Digital Construction and project management that allowed him to lead the transformation on such a large scale like Bird. He has a bachelor's in civil engineering from Ain Shams University, a diploma of project management from the American University in Cairo and Digital Transformation from London Business School. Prior to joining Bird, Adel has worked in various organizations and countries, e.g., ALEC, a large multi-disciplinary construction company in Dubai.



## Speaker Series: Emerging trends in AI for NB's Priority Sectors/Industries

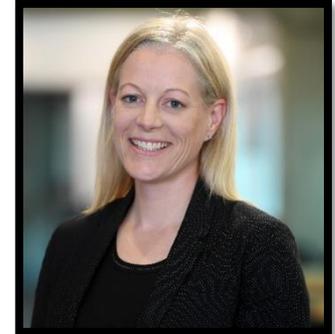
- **Elliot Sullivan, Director of Product Management, Cloud Solutions, Remsoft**  
Elliot leads the Remsoft Cloud solutions team, overseeing the product innovation road map and guiding development to meet forestry market requirements. He holds a master's degree in Computer Science from the University of New Brunswick and has extensive experience developing and managing both desktop and cloud products.
- **Amin Jula, Chief Data Scientist, Fiddlehead io.**  
*\*Details unavailable*



## Speaker Series: Artificial Intelligence – the promise vs. the hype

- **Jennifer LaPlante, Executive Director, DeepSense**

Jennifer LaPlante is the Executive Director of DeepSense, an organization focused on driving economic growth through increased comprehension and adoption of artificial intelligence in the Canadian ocean sector. She holds an MBA and an MSc in Computing and Data Analytics. She is an active member of her community sitting on the Board of Directors of the Halifax Harbour Bridges Commission, a member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee for Arthritis Society and is Vice President of the Victoria Hall Society Board of Directors. She has served as a member of the Nominating Committee for the Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) and a member of the Government of Canada's AI Public Awareness Working Group. She is co-organizer of the Halifax Chapter of Women in Machine Learning and Data Science (WiMLDS), a global organization that aims to support and promote women and gender minorities who are practicing, studying or are interested in the fields of machine learning and data science. Jennifer was named one of DataIQ 2021 Top 100 Influential people in AI.



- **Wilco van Ginkel, Director of Data and Analytics and AI Leader, a3i**

A seasoned professional and leader with a passion to help other people becoming the new leaders of tomorrow. Wilco has in-depth knowledge and extensive international working experience. He has worked at strategic, tactical, and operational levels within start-ups, small, medium, and large enterprises.

- His Domain Expertise is:
  - Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Machine Learning (ML)
  - Data Science
  - Cyber Security

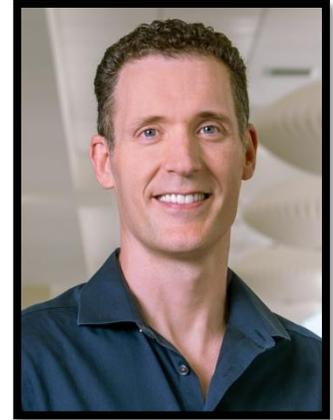
Wilco is the founder of a3i, Trust-in-AI Framework, Seculior, the CSA Dutch Chapter, and co-founder of the CSA Big Data Working Group. He is also the founder and host of the Data Crunch Podcast (available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts) and enjoys public speaking, writing, and giving lectures.



## Speaker Series: Building Collaborative Projects in AI

- **Erik Scheme, Prof. at UNB & Assoc. Director IBME**

Dr. Erik Scheme, PEng is the Associate Director of the Institute of Biomedical Engineering, the Director of the Health Technologies Lab, and an Associate Professor in Electrical and Computer Engineering. A common collaborator with industry, he is also an Adjunct Professor at Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick and the former NB Innovation Research Chair in Medical Technologies. An expert in biological signal processing, Dr. Scheme uses data analytics, machine learning, and AI to study and improve human movement, health, and happiness.



- **Moulay Akhloufi, Prof. at UdeM & PRIME Director**

Professor Moulay Akhloufi has a Bachelor of Science in Physics from University Abdelmalek Essaadi (Morocco) and a Bachelor of Engineering from Telecom Saint-Etienne (France). He received his Master's and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Ecole Polytechnique of Montreal and Laval University, respectively. He also holds an MBA from Laval University. He is currently Associate Professor in Computer Science, Head of the Perception, Robotics, and Intelligent Machines (PRIME) research group, and Director of the Center for Artificial Intelligence NB Power at Université de Moncton. Before joining Université de Moncton in 2016, he worked in the industry and technology transfer in machine vision and robotics. His research interests are in the areas of artificial intelligence, computer vision and intelligent robotic systems.

