



# MEARIE | Together Conference towards tomorrow

June 14-16, 2023  
[mearie.ca/mearie-conference](http://mearie.ca/mearie-conference)

Register today!

## Preliminary Agenda

Gain industry-based knowledge on the most relevant topics – *everything from technology, leadership, operational and financial risk management, and HR-related topics* – all inspired by your sector’s need to manage, adapt and move *Together Towards Tomorrow*.

**Day 1**  
Wednesday, June 14, 2023

**1:30 PM – 5:00 PM**  
Pre-Conference Workshop

**3:00 PM – 8:00 PM**  
Concierge Desk Open for Hotel Check-in

**6:30 PM – 11:00 PM**  
Conference Kick-off Evening Reception

**Day 2**  
Thursday, June 15, 2023

**7:00 AM – 8:30 AM**  
Breakfast for Delegates & Registered Guests

**8:30 AM – 12:00 PM**  
Conference Program – Plenary & Streamed Sessions

**12:30 PM – 5:30 PM**  
Golf Tournament / Wellness Afternoon Activities

**6:15 PM – 11:00 PM**  
Reception & Lakeside BBQ Dinner & Entertainment

**Day 3**  
Friday, June 16, 2023

**7:00 AM – 8:45 AM**  
Breakfast for Delegates & Registered Guests

**8:45 AM – 12:00 AM**  
Conference Program

**12:00 PM**  
Conference ends – Takeaway Lunch

For information about The MEARIE Conference, visit: [mearie.ca/mearie-conference](http://mearie.ca/mearie-conference)  
Have questions or wish to sponsor our event? Email us: [conference@mearie.ca](mailto:conference@mearie.ca).

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Managing risk  
together

## Wednesday, June 14, 2023

### **Pre-Conference Workshop: IDEA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility)**

**Presented by:** Dr. Nafeesa Jalal, *NJGC Inc.*

In this workshop, participants will develop a better understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, its complexities and what barriers, both conscious and unconscious, exist within our organizations. We will discuss inclusivity and what behaviours to adopt. As well, Dr. Jalal will explain the importance and urgency of a DEI Strategic Plan for your organization, share an outline of how to develop and implement one, touch on the importance of measuring success using metrics, list resources required and share best practices.

## Thursday, June 15, 2023

### **Keynote Speaker: The Future of AI-ncredible**

**Presented by:** Mitch Joel, *Business Transformation & Marketing Expert*

The pace of change driven by AI in recent years is astounding, and it has the potential to continue disrupting businesses in the future. Let's explore how it's driving better ideation, creativity, and storytelling. In this presentation, we'll dive into the challenges and opportunities that come with incorporating AI into your content and storytelling. We look at real-world examples of companies that are successfully (and subtly) integrating AI tools.

The future of AI-ncredible, and this presentation will provide a roadmap for how businesses can harness the power of AI to drive innovation, creativity and storytelling.



## Plenary & Stream Sessions

### **Securing Substations with AI Technology**

**Presented by:** John McClean, *Util-Assist*

Electric utility substations are typically remotely operated, with engineering and operation considerations foremost and security limited to fences, gates, and locks. With copper theft, graffiti, and equipment and vehicle theft on the rise, security has become paramount. Traditional security cameras are a great start to protecting vital utility infrastructure, but an unmonitored camera can only record an incident, not prevent it. Safeguarding utility substations presents unique challenges that demand a more proactive strategy. SecureAssist is a live video monitoring service tailored to utilities and enhanced by artificial intelligence. Thanks to advances in technology, the solution is highly effective yet remains affordable. Each SecureAssist deployment is fully customized, with site-specific action plans reviewed and approved by the utility.

## **Legal Workplace Trends to Watch**

**Presented by:** Anne Gallop, *Norton Rose Fulbright Canada*

There are a variety of issues shaping the workplace landscape today. This session will feature an overview of a number of recent legislative changes impacting HR policy and practices, occupational safety, and other LDC workplace/operational topics.

## **MEARIE Claims Insights**

**Presented by:** Chris Morrison, *Will Davidson*

In the realm of liability claims, new and captivating matters and obstacles continually emerge. In this session, our speaker will explore the most recent legal advancements pertaining to liability claims in Ontario, including ongoing conversations and trends regarding data privacy in claims processes. Furthermore, he will shed light on the crucial legal considerations that MEARIE members must bear in mind when expanding their operations beyond Ontario or venturing into the United States.

## **MEARIE Group Benefits Health & Wellness Survey Results**

**Presented by:** Mike Trowell, *Comprehensive Benefit Solutions*

As organizations look to manage employee absenteeism, physical well-being, mental health and retention, they are increasing focus on health and wellness benefits. The results of MEARIE's Health and Wellness survey provides a snapshot of the sectors' current health and wellness services, and what to look for in the future.

## **Investment and Financial Risk**

**Presented by:** Slava Sherbatov, *Phillips, Hager & North Institutional GAM*

This is an insightful speaking session where our speaker will delve into the dynamism of recent interest rate movements, exploring their far-reaching implications on the investment landscape. Through a comprehensive analysis, we'll navigate the intricate connections between interest rates, inflation, and their impact on banks, including recent U.S. regional bank failures. Our speaker will discover the hidden risks and challenges that arise in this inflationary environment and share valuable insights to help you navigate and thrive amidst these fluctuations.

## **Learn How Positive Employee Mindsets Increase Performance**

**Presented by:** Paul Fairlie, *Heliosophy*

Employee well-being is critical for organizational performance. Employees with a High Positive Mindset have better overall well-being, are more resilient and more productive. Based on behavioural science, learn the four positive mindsets and how they can be measured and developed in your organization.

**Friday, June 16, 2023**

**Plenary & Stream Sessions**

**ESG – Myths & Realities**

**Presented by:** Sarah Keys, *Global Advisors Inc.*

In this presentation, our speaker will delve into the subject of ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance), which has become a prominent topic in the corporate world. One of the current challenges lies in the fact that the concept of ESG is not well understood or universally defined, making it susceptible to distortion by individuals with ulterior commercial and political motives. This backlash undermines the importance of ESG as a crucial factor in business and investment decision-making. Our speaker aims to provide clarity on the true meaning of ESG, current trends and future expectations, myths and realities related to ESG concepts, and highlight the importance of ESG risks and opportunities for the LDC sector.

**HR Panel – Hiring in Today’s Environment, Blending Cultures Through Mergers**

**Presented by:** Jane Hale-McDonald, *Grandbridge* | Andrew Covello, *Synergy North* | Jenny McGeachy, *Enova Power Corporation*

This panel session will explore two topics facing LDCs today. In the first part of this session, the panelists will share their views and learnings on how to hire and manage employees in today's environment. In the second part, learn what works and what does not when integrating different cultures into a new one after mergers.

**Cybersecurity & Risk Management**

**Presented by:** Rob McLeod, *eSentire*

Coming soon

**Talk Won’t Transform Culture, But Employee Engagement Will**

**Presented by:** Sid Ridgley, *Simul Corp*

Building on the blending culture discussion in the previous HR Panel session, Sid will demystify the process of cultural transformation, turning it from an abstract concept into a tangible reality. He will unveil the four foundational items that underpin successful culture transformation initiatives. From a strategic standpoint, culture transformation isn’t about making employees happy, it is a powerful force that empowers and enables individuals to make contributions that align with the core objectives of the organization, its people and its customers.

## **Executive Panel**

### ***Together Towards Tomorrow – The Utility of the Future***

The utility of the future will be here before we know this. This session focuses on how leaders see the change and risk management required to meet the challenge of the evolution of the utility sector and massive electrification efforts. Clearly there is more than one pathway to success on this front. This panel session will address concepts around corporate and systemic risk management and change management, through this discussion with senior executives currently dealing with these issues.

### **Panelists**

Scott Mudie, *Oakville Hydro Electricity Distribution Inc.*

Mike Matthews, *EVP Asset Strategy & Operations, Alectra Inc.*

Janice McMichael-Dennis, *MEARIE Board Member, Bluewater Power Distribution Inc.*

### **Moderator**

Bill Hawkins, *MMI President, The MEARIE Group*