Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression:

Recommendations for reducing online harms and safeguarding human rights in Canada

SEPTEMBER 2022

DEMOCRATIC
EXPRESSION
DÉMOCRATIQUE

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HOW TO CITE THIS REPORT

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» Visit the **Assembly website**: https://www.commissioncanada.ca

» Watch the **2020 Project video**: https://youtu.be/glPGGI6z6tE

» Visit the **Public Policy Forum website**: https://ppforum.ca

» Visit the **MASS LBP website**: http://masslbp.com

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ABOUT THE
INITIATIVE

DEMOCRATIC EXPRESSION DÉMOCRATIQUE

The Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression is a three-year initiative, led by the Public Policy Forum that aims to bring a concerted and disciplined review of the state of Canadian democracy and how it can be strengthened. The centerpiece is a small, deliberative Commission which will draw on available and original research, the insights of experts and the deliberations of a representative citizens' assembly to assess what to do about online harms and how to buttress the public good. The Commission is designed to offer insights and policy options on an annual basis that support the cause of Canada's democracy and social cohesion. The Commission is supported by national citizen assemblies as well as by an independent research program.

This initiative grew out of earlier insights about the relationship of digital technologies to Canada's democracy covered by the Public Policy Forum's ground-breaking report, **The Shattered Mirror** and its subsequent interdisciplinary research outlined in the **Democracy Divided** report (with UBC) and through the Digital Democracy Project partnership with McGill University.

The initiative is stewarded by a Project Secretariat, chaired by PPF and delivered in partnership with **MASS LBP** and the Centre for Media, Technology and Democracy at McGill University's **Max Bell School of Public Policy,** who are executing the national citizen assemblies and research program, respectively.

To learn more about the initiative and how you can become involved, please visit www.ppforum.ca/project/demx. The initiative will run from April 2020 to March 2023.

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This is the final report marking the culmination of a unique effort to bring Canadians closer to the centre of one of the most consequential policy initiatives in a generation.

3 Assemblies | **90** Canadians | **6,000** volunteer hours

CHAIR'S NOTE

The Canadian Citizens' Assemblies on Democratic Expression — three in total and involving more than **90 Canadians** who together contributed **6,000 volunteer hours** — have examined how the Government of Canada should regulate digital service providers to create a safe environment where Canadians can express themselves and be protected from a range of harms.

The members of the Assemblies have come from communities across Canada. Together, they represent almost every facet of Canadian life. Some are digital natives — spending much of their working and leisure time online. Others are less familiar with the range of online services but are nevertheless concerned with their significance and social impact.

Each Assembly has been unanimous on the need for immediate and far-reaching regulations to curb what they see as the pernicious and largely unconstrained ability of bad actors to exploit, harass, and victimize Canadians online.

They express deep scepticism about the sincerity or ability of many digital service providers to take the steps necessary to curb these harms.

At stake in the minds of many members is the future of democracy. This democracy is not an unconstrained, anything goes, free-for-all, but rather a society that upholds the same principles which they believe have made Canada successful — a respect for difference, a belief in human rights, a recognition that there must be reasonable limits to expression in a free society, and the conviction that a good society is one where citizens act responsibly towards one another.

Their recommendations repeatedly seek to shift the balance of power from technology companies towards citizens. To do this, they demand far greater accountability, meaningful privacy, strong protections for children and vulnerable communities, and most dramatically, extensive user controls — including user ownership of data — that would fundamentally change the economics of digital services and provide users with more options to change service providers and manage their online experience.

The Canadian Citizens' Assemblies on Democratic Expression have also demonstrated the usefulness of linking expert-led and citizen-led policy exercises and a close reader can compare the analysis, concerns and recommendations provided by these two bodies which have worked in parallel to offer government different vantage points.

This report covers the deliberations of the third Assembly. It was empanelled at the request of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, to support his department's efforts to reset their approach to digital regulation. The Assembly was asked to review the recommendations of the department's Expert Group and consider other inputs to provide detailed guidance on the best approach to reducing the prevalence of online harms while safeguarding democratic expression. Working under tight timelines, members of the first and second Assembly were invited to participate in this third 'capstone' assembly. We were very heartened that so many would volunteer to serve again.

This work is part of what the OECD has described as a global 'deliberative wave' made up of more than **600 citizens' assemblies** advising governments throughout the world. The members of the Canadian Citizens' Assemblies on Democratic Expression have not only made an invaluable contribution to advancing digital regulation in Canada, they have also helped to demonstrate the value of citizen deliberation and how intractable and divisive issues can be profitably addressed with less partisanship and rancour by bringing citizens to the table. I hope their generous public service can be a model for future assemblies throughout Canada.

Sincerely,

PETER MACLEOD

Chair, Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression

This is the final report marking the culmination of a unique effort to bring Canadians closer to the centre of one of the most consequential policy initiatives in a generation.

WHAT POLICY MAKERS
SHOULD KNOW

The first and second Citizens' Assemblies on Democratic Expression were held in conjunction with the Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression — an initiative intended to be three years long, funded by the Government of Canada and the McConnell Foundation and led by the Public Policy Forum in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

Over the winter and spring of 2022, the Department of Heritage and its Digital Citizen Initiative adjusted their approach and convened an Expert Advisory Group on Online Safety. This group was mandated to provide the Minister of Canadian Heritage with advice on how best to design the legislative and regulatory framework to address harmful content online, and how to best incorporate the feedback the government received during the national consultation they held in 2021 on their original legislative proposal. To expand this advisory process, the Ministry of Heritage requested a slightly modified third citizens' assembly to review and respond to the suggestions from the Expert Advisory Group and all the work that had come before.

The third and final Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression is a body of 45 volunteer Canadians representing every province and territory as well as the breadth of perspectives and diversity of Canada. This "capstone" Assembly was convened in May and June 2022 and was composed of 39 members who had previously participated in one of the first two assemblies and six new members who had originally volunteered for the initial assemblies but were not selected through the civic lottery process. Due to the pandemic, and the compressed timeline, the Assembly followed a hybrid model. The Assembly began with a one-hour online orientation session and then met on two Saturdays in June for two-hour online sessions. The majority of the learning and deliberation was conducted in person in Ottawa where members gathered for five days in mid-June. Working in both official languages, the Assembly heard from more than a dozen recognized experts as well as senior representatives from Google and Meta.

This Capstone Assembly was mandated to:

▪ Learn about the principles of democratic expression and the impact of digital technologies;

▪ Review the advice government has received for establishing a new legislative framework to strengthen online safety and protect user rights;

▪ Consider how other countries are developing similar regulations;

▪ Recommend the actions government should take to strengthen online safety and protect user rights.

> Included in this mandate was a review of the recommendations of the recently concluded Government of Canada's Expert Advisory Group on Online Safety, as well as the 2020 and 2021 **Commissions on Democratic Expression** and the 2020 and 2021 **Citizens' Assemblies on Democratic Expression**.

The Assembly identified seven values that should shape Canada's approach to internet regulation and unanimously endorsed 43 recommendations which they believe will help to safeguard and strengthen our democracy while reducing the prevalence of online harms.

The Assembly strongly believes that there are important and difficult trade-offs to weigh in avoiding over-regulation and censorship while protecting our social fabric and those members of our society most vulnerable to, or targeted by, online hate and harms. They believe that digital service providers as well as users of digital services all have a duty to act responsibly and should face penalties when they fail to do so. More concretely, the Assembly believes there ought to be a Digital Services Regulator (DSR), at arm's length from government, tasked to establish standards for the safe operation of digital services, and enforce compliance. Alongside the DSR, the Assembly recommends an Ombudsperson's Office to manage complaints, oversee a well resourced public education campaign to improve digital literacy and safe online practices, and provide resources for those seeking redress and/or healing.

The Assembly continues to be concerned that digital platforms have operated for too long with a lack of accountability and transparency. While these platforms have become a part of daily life for so many people, they don't always function in the best interests of the public. The Assembly members assert that action must be taken by the government, and that it must be swift with ongoing review and revision, and continued public engagement, to keep up with the latest technologies and risks to public safety and democratic health.

The Assembly appreciates the value and significance of the internet and online platforms for a thriving democracy but sees particular risk for those who are vulnerable including seniors and children and those who experience the impacts of systemic racism, colonialism, as well as other prejudices and barriers.

Accordingly, they suggest that special attention must be paid to developing ethical standards for the safe operation of digital services. Though beyond their mandate, the Assembly also argues forcefully for reducing barriers to access and remains cognizant of the high cost and limited availability of broadband services across rural and remote regions of the country.

While working to limit harms is paramount, the Assembly members simultaneously see the necessity of preserving freedom of expression and the ability of online users to be able to share dissenting or unpopular opinions. They believe there are few areas of content that warrant immediate take-down measures, but advocate for a layered approach to recourse and accountability for managing the most egregious content.

The Assembly's recommendations advocate for a risk-based approach that encourages ongoing risk assessments and transparency through all elements of platform operation, empowerment of users with regards to their data and their ability to control their online experience, robust research and international cooperation, and strong whistle-blower protections.

Highlights of their recommendations include calling on the government to:

No. 1
Establish an arm's length **Digital Services Regulator** to develop and enforce standards.

No. 2
Establish a **Digital Ombudsperson's Office** to track complaints and publish periodic reports on issues of concern to Canadians.

No. 3
Label and **severely limit the use of bots** on social media platforms.

No. 4
Ensure that **digital services providers conduct a wide range of risk assessments** that demonstrate the safety of their services, with particular regard for impacts on children, marginalized groups, human rights, as well as emotional or psychological harms.

No. 5
Ensure that platform standards **take into account regional contexts** and culture.

No. 6
Create a **voluntary, cross-platform system** of verified users.

No. 7
Affirm the right of users to own their data and assert greater control over their online experience.

No. 8
Make significant **investments in digital literacy** and user awareness.

No. 9
Create a **unique identifier system** for online news that can help users confirm its validity and source.

ASSEMBLY
OVERVIEW

What is a Citizens' Assembly?

A citizens' assembly is a long-form deliberative process that typically involves **36 to 48 randomly selected residents** who are chosen using a process called a civic lottery, a random selection method that prioritizes fairness and wide representation. The individuals selected for a citizens' assembly come together to learn about, and then advise public authorities on, divisive and complex issues that typically involve trade-offs or compromises. The assembly members' objective is to reach a consensus on a series of recommendations that can be directed to government, industry, and society at large.

What is a Civic Lottery?

A civic lottery is a balanced way of selecting the members of a citizens' assembly. It is based on a form of sortition that uses the postal system and a randomized selection process to recruit panellists. The result is a group of volunteers that broadly match the demographics of the jurisdiction they represent.

For both the 2020 and 2021 Assemblies, **12,500 invitations** were sent to randomly selected households across Canada. The invitations were transferable to anyone aged 18 or over living in that residence.

The letter invited recipients to volunteer their time to meet online and in person, learn about issues, and discuss and propose recommendations to inform the work of the Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression, as well as governments across Canada.

Over **600 invitees** volunteered for each year's Citizens' Assembly, and from this pool of eligible volunteers, **42 were selected** by Civic Lottery. This stratified sampling methodology ensured that members were selected at random, but in a way that broadly represented the demographics of Canada — balancing for gender, geographic representation from all ten provinces and three territories, and representations of age groups, preferred official language (English and French), and Indigenous communities. Civic lotteries produce generally diverse groups without selection criteria such as ethnicity, income, education level, familiarity with the topic, or other attributes. In short, each assembly was each composed in such a way as to deliver good demographic diversity and to ensure that it was essentially representative of the residents of Canada.

ASSEMBLY OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY?

A citizens' assembly is a long-form deliberative process that typically involves 36 to 48 randomly selected citizens and residents who meet to examine an issue, reach consensus, and draft recommendations for public authorities.

WHAT IS A CIVIC LOTTERY?

A civic lottery is a balanced way of selecting members of a citizens' assembly. It is based on a form of sortition that uses the postal system and a randomized selection process to recruit panelists. The result is a group of volunteers that broadly match the demographics of the jurisdiction they represent.

ASSEMBLY PROFILE
45 MEMBERS*

Gender

20	23	2
Female	Male	Non-binary

Language

12	33
French	English

Age bracket

18-29: **10**   30-44: **11**   45-64: **15**   64+: **9**

Members who identify as:

5 Indigenous

11 Part of a racialized group

Hours of meeting time per member: 45
Cumulative session hours: 2,025

Members per province/territory:

4	**AB** – Alberta	2	**NU** – Nunavut
4	**BC** – British Columbia	13	**ON** – Ontario
3	**MB** – Manitoba	1	**PEI** – Prince Edward Island
3	**NB** – New Brunswick	6	**QC** – Quebec
2	**NL** – Newfoundland and Labrador	2	**SK** – Saskatchewan
2	**NT** –Northwest Territories	1	**YT** – Yukon
2	**NS** – Nova Scotia		

Owing to personal and health-related circumstances, three members were not able to travel to Ottawa for the final sessions.

MEET THE
ASSEMBLY MEMBERS

SOUBHI **ABLA**
CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI

I was born in Charlottetown, PEI, and have lived there my entire life. I currently work as a mortgage broker but my past work experience in web-hosting support and as a server administrator were the driving forces behind my participation in the Assembly. I have always been interested in the topic of disinformation and online harm and look forward to being able to learn and share my perspectives on this important topic.

FAUZIA **BAJWA**
ST. BRUNO, QC

I am of Pakistani descent, was born and raised in the UK, and have had the rare privilege of living in four countries on three continents. I studied Computer Science at university and subsequently worked as a software developer in technology companies large and small. While I find digital technology fascinating, what piques my interest even more is the impact it has on our society and on the way, we lead our lives. The confluence of innovations that gave us global, mobile, and comprehensive access to information has also brought significant threats to our privacy and autonomy. These issues have been of concern to me for a while, so when I received the invitation to be part of this Citizens' Assembly, I jumped at the opportunity. I hope that we can explore ways of embracing our digital lives while safeguarding our priceless freedoms. I now live in beautiful St. Bruno, Québec — a true paradise on earth.

ROBERT **BARCLAY**
BERESFORD, NB

I was born in Toronto in 1960 and raised in Richmond Hill. I quit grade nine three times despite having had a great elementary academic record. In the early 1980's I followed my parents to Bathurst, NB, where they were originally from, to work for my father at North Shore Signs. In 1984 I met Carole Asselin, who I eventually married, and we had three children: Michelle, Sebastien and Gabriel. In the 1990's, I returned to school and received a diploma in Multimedia at CCNB Miramichi. I was also on the Principal's Honour Roll, selected Valedictorian, and was awarded a bronze academic medal. I worked all over New Brunswick in Multi-media but eventually settled down into the role of house husband, doing chores and taking care of the children. Now the children have left, and Carole and I are both "retired" – she has an online business: she is a PaintShop Professional. I look after the chores. And for some reason I can't remember, I decided to write, record, and do a video for a new song every week this year. We are almost through half the year and, so far, I have managed to do just that.

FRÉDÉRICK **BARRETTE**
QUÉBEC, QC

Originally from Quebec City, I have a bachelor's degree in history and geography from Laval University. I am currently in my first official teaching position as a young 23-year-old in charge of six groups of Secondary III students for the "History of Quebec and Canada" course. On another subject, at the age of 13, I started to be part of the Cadets of Canada program. After reaching my majority, I enrolled as an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force to continue my involvement in this wonderful program. One of the key elements of this program is the development of citizenship. I believe that the mission of the Assembly falls directly into my area of expertise. I hope to contribute to the discussions and learn from others in attendance.

ANN **BURNS**
CORNWALLIS PARK, NS

Having been retired for 12 years, I have been involved in many community initiatives. I feel it is important to give back and being a transplant from Saskatchewan this is a great way to meet people! I worked with the Dominion Command of the Royal Canadian Legion for many years and was fortunate to meet and assist many of our veterans. I finished up my career with the Regina Catholic School Board, so I have interacted and worked with a wide variety of people from children to elderly veterans. I have served on the provincial and local board of the Special Olympics. I believe that everyone, regardless of their abilities, deserves respect and inclusion. I look forward to serving on this Citizens' Assembly and helping to make a difference!

ANDRÉ **CYR**
THETFORD MINES, QC

I come from a family of 13 children. I spent five years in the military, from the ages of 19 to 24, where I learned to speak English and obtained a diploma in technical radio. I worked in the field of alarm systems. Now I'm in pre-retirement and self-employed. I want to get involved in the Assembly because I believe that communication is important, and I am looking for the truth. We live in a world of communication, and so I want to open my eyes to this reality.

SARA-JAYNE **DEMPSTER**
INUVIK, NWT

I've lived in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, for eight years. We moved from the Greater Toronto Area in 2012 and have never looked back! Our family loves our small town and our close-knit community. I work for the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority as a Medical Billing Administrator. My education background is in Health Information Management and I'm currently working on my Bachelor's degree in Health Administration through Athabasca University. My biggest hobby seems to be education at this point as I have been a full-time student for the better part of four years now, though I am trying to learn to garden this year. I'm pretty excited about growing vegetables in the Arctic! I'm also the second vice-president of the Ladies Auxiliary at our local Legion and the secretary for our Union Local. My husband actually signed me up for the Assembly. I hope I can bring a thoughtful perspective and learn a lot during our time together.

JAMES DENNY **JUNIOR**
EEL GROUND, NB

I am a 51-year-old Indigenous man from the Natoaganeg (Eel Ground) First Nation community near Miramichi, New Brunswick. Natoaganeg is a small Mi'kmaq community with an approximate population of 1,000 members and is nestled on the banks of the renowned Miramichi River. I have experience within the political arena, having served as a two-time elected band council representative for my community. In addition to this, I was a New Brunswick Green Party candidate in 2018 and have served on numerous boards and committees within the Atlantic region. I bring a wealth of knowledge and experience regarding Indigenous issues ranging from economic development to human resources and social development. Outside of my professional life, I enjoy being active in and around the local service district. I am currently a member of the Miramichi Chamber of Commerce and have served as past president of the local Toastmasters International club as well as vice-president of the Miramichi Shrine Club. I am also active in Northumberland Lodge No. 17, Free and Accepted Masons, and was recently elected as head of this organization — the first Indigenous man to hold the title in the 160-year history of this fraternity. I am also a member of the Moncton Valley Scottish Rite, Ancient and Accepted Freemasons, and hold the rank of 32nd degree Master Mason.

ABDOULKARIM **DIAKITE**
IQALUIT, NU

I am a Black/African Muslim who acknowledges that I live in Iqaluit since 2011, the Capital City of the Territory of Nunavut, the land of the Inuit. I work for the Government of Nunavut as a representative and an advocate for adults who lack the cognitive capacity to make their own decisions. I am also an entrepreneur as I have owned a business since 2014. I am excited to be part of this cohort, as a Black-Muslim male living in a territory that has had it share of oppression, the tabled topic is at heart for me. I look forward to contributing to this process that will ensure that freedom of expression is protected while also protecting the vulnerable, minorities, and disadvantaged people, etc.

NAOMI **DUFFUS**
SURREY, BC

My name is Naomi and I've lived in Vancouver, British Columbia, my entire life, though I love to travel. Currently, I am a student working on my Bachelor of Science degree in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, and I am looking forward to graduating this summer! As a 22-year-old who is constantly immersed in the ever-changing world of technology, I thought participating in this year's Citizens' Assembly would be a great opportunity for me to learn and gain insight from other Canadians on the topic, as well as offer some insight myself. I hope that together we can come up with ideas that accurately represent the needs of all Canadian citizens living today, and will also protect future generations to come.

OLIVIER **EMOND-GODIN**
YELLOWKNIFE, NT

My name is Olivier Emond-Godin, from La Malbaie, Quebec. I am thirty years old and have been married

to my wife Kelsey for two years. We had our first child this past October. I joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 2014 and currently work as a line technician in Yellowknife. I have great interest in philosophy, psychology, history, mythology, and theology. I believe the path for a meaningful life is a combination of great responsibilities, high and defined goals, and rigorous honesty toward yourself and others. That is why I joined the Forces and answered yes to the Assembly on Democratic Expression. Being out of my comfort zone, serving others, taking on responsibilities, and overcoming challenges gives order and structure to my life — only then can I try to improve things in my community.

JOANNE **GILLIS**
CORNER BROOK, NL

My family has deep roots in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. My husband and I were both born and raised here, and so were our parents. I currently work with Memorial University at the Grenfell campus here in Corner Brook where I help the faculty administer the Master's program in Art and Environmental Policy. My earlier career has included: an on/off stint as admissions officer at the McKinley Canada Career College; working in various avenues of economic development with the regional economic development boards; being a business advisor with the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs; and working with Member of Parliament Gudie Hutchings. I have a diploma and a degree in business administration, and I'm set to start a Master's program soon in Adult Education and Community Development. I love spending time with family and friends and going on walks with

our two dogs. I also enjoy hiking and reading. When I received the invitation, I did my own research about what a Citizens' Assembly was and what purpose it served. I think this is a great opportunity to meet people from across the country and have my say in the different things going on in Canada with regard to social media. I'm interested in knowing what can be done to filter out fake news and ensure that any and all information conveyed to the public is accurate.

YVAN **GOSSELIN**
LAC BAKER, NB

I was born in Québec and have been living in New Brunswick for two years. Being from a large family I learned at a very young age to share, help and respect. With training in natural sciences and bio-ecology, I have worked for over thirty years in the fields of environment, wildlife, horticulture and landscaping. Currently retired, father of a daughter, a biologist specializing in cyanobacteria, I continue to tame the beauty and complexity of the living world. Also by getting closer to the natural environment and by sharing this passion in my daily activities I feel I am contributing in my own way to a better knowledge and greater respect of the world around us. Since the arrival of the web and social media it seems to me essential to understand and establish the limits of the sacred "Freedom of Expression". We must, and it is urgent to, ban all prejudicial, discriminatory and violent speech that endangers the very integrity of individuals and our society that we want to be peaceful, benevolent and egalitarian. I hope that my participation in the Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression will contribute to achieving these objectives.

ALEXI **GUINDON RIOPEL**
ORLEANS, ON

My name is Alexi and I was born in 2000, in Ottawa. I have lived in this city my whole life, and I am now in my third year at the University of Ottawa in the Criminology program. I have been working at Cora's Breakfast and Lunch for over three years in the kitchen, and I have been working for Students for Seniors since 2018, where I help seniors familiarize themselves with their electronics. I also created a server hosting company with a few friends this year. Right now, I am mostly focusing my time on my studies and work, but in my free time, I enjoy participating in outdoor activities. I plan on possibly pursuing my studies in law in the future.

EARL **HALL**
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

My name is Earl, and I am a resident of Winnipeg, Manitoba, and used to work in tech. I am interested in the Assembly process and in understanding what changes can be made.

NAIMA **KAGUKU**
EDMONTON, AB

I am a Canadian citizen and Kenyan by birth. Moving to Canada at the age of 14 was eye opening to a whole new multicultural and diverse world for me. I completed my high school diploma in Lloydminster, where I then resided. I also became a member of the first youth council in Lloydminster where I served two terms. I was involved in many causes including the #180ALERT (youth drug

prevention forum) and created awareness while engaging youth in conversations about drug use and drug prevention initiatives in the community. I also participated in, and was sponsored to attend, RYPEN (Rotary Youth Enrichment Program). This is where I learned the value of teamwork and developed life as well as leadership skills. In April 2016 I was selected as one of the 33 delegates in Alberta to meet with our MLAs to learn the basics of Canadian Democracy and understand the legislative process. Having gone through all these experiences as a young immigrant, now a mother to a one year old boy, I've come to realize there is more than what meets the eye in terms of true integration to a new system. Hence, I believe the Citizens' Assembly is a vital entity which brings all our different experiences to be addressed and shared so as to uphold the Canadian example of being one of the best safe haven countries for most immigrants that have been displaced from their country of origin.

JOHN **KAMASSAH**
HAMILTON, ON

My name is John, and I am a resident of Hamilton, Ontario. I am excited for the opportunity to participate in this conversation about an important and pervasive issue.

RHÉAL **LAFRENIÈRE**
ÎLE-DES-CHÊNES, MB

I was born in the small francophone community of Notre-Dame de Lourdes in Manitoba. I grew up in the village but spent a lot of time on farms

and when I was 15 years old, started to work on a honey bee farm. This job not only served me well during my high school years, it also launched me on a career path in entomology. I earned a Masters degree in entomology at the University of Manitoba and am currently employed as the Provincial Apiarist for the province of Manitoba. My wife, Carmelle and I have two sons, Christian & Vincent and a dog named Gypsy. Carmelle and I will be entering a new phase in life as we are both retiring this summer. Although we live in the town of Île des Chênes, we spend most of the summer at our cottage in the Lac du Bonnet area of Manitoba. I am looking forward to participating in this assembly because democratic expression is an extremely important topic and an integral part of our Canadian society and identity. It needs to be protected but it also needs to be respectful and compassionate.

GUY **LEBLANC**
EDMONTON, AB

In my 43 years as a peace officer, and in life, I have been part of tremendous progress in how we communicate as individuals, groups, our country and in the world. Unfortunately, with progress comes bumps in the road and we are at a point where these bumps must be addressed. I look forward to being a small part of the solution.

SYLVAIN **LEBLANC**
KINGSTON, ON

I am a retired officer of the Canadian Army now employed as a professor of computer engineering at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston, Ontario where I have been serving for the past two decades. Democratic expression is a passion of mine with which I have a chance to engage through work in labour relations. I am also particularly interested in the technologies used online and which I explore through research in my role as the RMC Chair for Cyber Security.

CHERYL **LLOYD**
PRINCE ALBERT, SK

I volunteered for this Citizens' Assembly because I am, among other things, a writer. Some parts of this Assembly, as I understand it so far, will affect me directly. I have taken several distance education courses at the university level, mostly on different writing styles. I volunteer at the local museum as a data entry clerk (and I'm learning a lot about local history at the same time), and I am also involved in both a local writers' group and a stitchers' guild. I currently herd cats in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. I moved here to go back to school after I left fixing aircraft in the Canadian Armed Forces. I am also an amateur radio operator.

STEPHANIE **MAKSYM**
KITCHENER, ON

My name is Stephanie Maksym. I grew up in St. Catharines, Ontario, and moved to Kitchener 11 years ago. I retired from a market research firm where I worked as a researcher-interviewer. I have three sons: one in the Kitchener area, one in Toronto, and one who has moved back to Simcoe. I live in a retirement community and enjoy my

local ladies' group and book club. When I got the Citizens' Assembly invitation in the mail, I thought the issue was valid and interesting, which made me want to volunteer. I think a lot of people don't fully appreciate or think about how much our lives have been changed by technology.

ADRIEN **MARCOTTE**
LA POCATIÈRE, QC

Hi there, my name is Adrien and I'm a computer analyst originally from La Prairie, now living in La Pocatière. My favorite activity is writing, whether it's code or words; I also like to ask myself questions, and even more so when they lead to something useful. I look forward to contributing to this Assembly, and I hope that solutions will be found to better manage the effects of new technologies on our democracy and our interpersonal relationships.

ERIC **MARK**
TORONTO, ON

My name is Eric Mark. I am a born-and-raised Torontonian, who lived in BC, Alberta, and southwestern Ontario before returning to Toronto. I am bilingual in French, have an urban planning background, and currently work for a federal crown corporation. I joined the Assembly as a lover of Canadian politics so I could have a say in shaping policy on an issue that will continue to increasingly affect us all. I was very curious and eager to see how the Assembly process would work to gather a joint statement from such a cross-section of Canadians.

LAURA **MATHIAS-JOE**
NORTH VANCOUVER, BC

My name is Laura and I was born and raised in North Vancouver, BC. I am a full-time student as well as a full-time advisor for Audi. I volunteered for the Assembly because it sounded like an amazing opportunity to learn about disinformation and provide input. I honestly wasn't expecting to get chosen (with my luck), and I'm so happy I did! It was one of the most memorable, humbling experiences I've ever had!

CHARLIE **MORIN**
WINNIPEG, MB

My name is Charlie Morin, I am a writer and editor based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on Treaty 1 territory. My work focuses mainly on harm reduction, reproductive health, and gender identity. I have a B.A. in Rhetoric, Writing and Communications from the University of Winnipeg. I currently hold the position of Features Editor for The Uniter and work as assistant editor creating the Hansard transcript for the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. In my spare time, I draw cartoons and travel. I look forward to voicing my thoughts on the uses of digital technology and learning more about the impacts of a citizens' assembly on legislation.

PAULA **MOWAT**
WHITEHORSE, YT

I grew up in the Yukon, and feel lucky to have been able to return home after post-secondary studies and draw on my background in public health to

work in policy and program development. I enjoy spending time outside with friends and family, as well as time spent reading a good book. I am thankful to have been invited to attend this third Citizens' Assembly, and to be able to gather with folks from across Canada to have deep, heartfelt discussions about our concerns, our hopes and our ideas for creating changes to the online ecosystem.

KENNETH **PEEL**
TORONTO, ON

My name is Ken Peel. I've been a lawyer in Ontario since 1977, and have been active since 1983 in Canada's railway law and transportation sectors as counsel, advisor, and advocate. This work has involved federal issues as well as matters in almost every province — including an issue in Nunavut. I was born in Montreal and grew up in Québec. I attended university in Montreal as a political science undergrad. I was interested in constitutional and Parliamentary matters. At school I was also quite engaged in social issues and debate with the Québec Youth Parliament — eventually becoming its Premier. Summer work included a couple of years researching multicultural communities and, later, two summers of work in Ottawa on international matters with "External Affairs". I am married to Katherine — a writer. We had two sons: Lucas was lost to cancer at age 25, while John is a medical doctor. John is now working towards a PhD in anaesthesiology at the University of Toronto. I've been ever curious and a keen follower of news and public affairs and a reader of history. I am interested in fine arts, plays, dance, and music. I am also a fan of the Toronto Blue Jays and have

fond memories of the Expos. I'm looking forward to sharing in the learning and discussions with fellow Citizens' Assembly members.

PIERRE **PILON**
GATINEAU, QC

I am a native of the Outaouais region of Québec and hold a bachelor's degree in administration from the University of Québec in Outaouais. I worked as a civil servant in the federal government, mainly in IT. My career has given me a lot as I worked in several ministries and in different functions, including that of middle manager. This great career spanned a period of 35 years. I have been retired since 2007 and it is important for me to be involved in my community by volunteering for different causes. I believe that the Assembly allowed us to gather and communicate, and I was able to express my vision of what should be done in order to better regulate digital technologies of the 21st century for the common good.

RABINSON **RAJU**
SUDBURY, ON

I was born in India in the state of Punjab and moved to Canada in 2015. I settled in Sudbury, Ontario, where I was a student at Cambrian College. Currently, I am an Area Manager of the A&Ws across Sudbury. Even though I didn't know what to expect, I volunteered for the Assembly as it seemed like a good opportunity. Immediately the space made me feel welcome, and I'm excited to learn more about democracy and our role in it.

SHARON **RAMSHAW**
OSHAWA, ON

I was born in Bowmanville, Ontario. I grew up on a farm outside of Blackstock, Ontario. I moved to Oshawa after marriage and had two daughters. I was widowed in 1994. I completed Grade 13 at Cartwright High School, and took courses in dental reception, dental radiography, and computers at Durham College and George Brown College. I worked in a dental office as receptionist/office manager for 20 years before retiring in 2010. I have two grandchildren who are the loves of my life. I enjoy going on cruises, knitting, crocheting, reading, and watching crime shows on TV. I decided to volunteer for the Assembly after reading the information package that was sent. It sounded appealing and like something that would be worth doing.

NATHAN **RAY**
EDMONTON, AB

I grew up in Edmonton and have a sister who is two years younger than me. She is finishing a political economy degree. Both my parents grew up on family farms in Alberta. My mom is a retired teacher and my dad a retired petrochemical/oilfield worker. We have always talked about politics, democracy, and finance in our household, so I am grateful for this opportunity to participate in a citizens' assembly. I have an instrumentation diploma from NAIT and a commercial driver's license. I have worked a variety of jobs from soccer referee to political canvassing to currently Conductor at CN. I have also been lucky enough to travel and visit five continents so far. In my spare time I love to be social with friends and family, taking in the variety of activities Edmonton has to offer.

PAULINE **RANKIN-BLANKENHORN**
NORTH YORK, ON

Originally from Trinidad, I now live with my husband Uli in Don Mills, Ontario. I have lived a varied life full of ups and downs that has taught me resilience. I have helped family members struggling with addiction, violence, and illness, and have also managed a variety of disabilities myself (including disc problems and FSHD-muscular dystrophy), but have always found solace in religion. I worked in real estate and owned a chocolate shop. I am a certified LifeSuccess Coach and a member of the National Speaker Association. I have one son, Kai, and I love talking to people. I am excited about the opportunity to participate in the Assembly.

MALIN **ROZON**
SASKATOON, SK

I'm a tutor and digital artist with a degree in linguistics (philosophy minor) from the University of Saskatchewan. I have a history of formal debate and public speaking, having spent over 10 years as a debater, judge, and coach at various levels. My day job is in administrative support with the Government of Saskatchewan, where I'm also proud to contribute to the employee Pride Alliance Network and to equity and inclusion work within disability programs. I'm participating in this Assembly because I have been an enthusiastic citizen of the internet since I was old enough to use a computer, and I care deeply about responsibly fostering online spaces. I look forward to contributing to this important discussion.

MOTASEM **SALEM**
MISSISSAUGA, ON

I am married and live with my wife and four children. My family and I moved to Canada and made it home about six years ago. As a new Canadian, I'm excited to participate in the Citizens' Assembly and to learn from and collaborate with such a diverse group of passionate Canadians. I would like to think that through this contribution, I am playing a small part in shaping a better future for my children and their generation and preparing them to face future challenges. I work in the field of software engineering and data analysis. Before moving to Canada, I worked for multi-national companies in the Middle East and Europe. I also previously worked in management consulting firms that served enterprise clients such as financial institutions and government agencies on various technology-related initiatives.

IAN **SHEPPARD**
NORTH BAY, ON

My name is Ian Sheppard and I am from North Bay, Ontario. I have an advanced diploma as a computer programmer analyst, and hold a 310T journeyman license. Ever since I was a child, my father always taught us to be caring and helpful when it comes to others. Holding on to that principle, I have become a volunteer fire-fighter to better serve my community and help keep people safe. I am an active member of my community and volunteer at many of the local annual events. When this opportunity presented itself to me, I became excited to be part of this process and lend my help.

SHANNON **SNAKE**
BOTHWELL, ON

I work for the First Nations Ontario Works department of the Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, Thamesville, Ontario. I am Oneida of the Oneida Nation and I'm learning today how to speak Oneida. I'm looking forward to participating in this Assembly to discuss the spread of truth online, specifically concerning Indigenous peoples and communities. We don't always find the right information.

CLAIRE **SORMANY**
QUÉBEC CITY, QC

With a degree in law and public relations, I practiced as an attorney for a short time before reorienting my career to communications and marketing. Among other things, I created and managed the Information and promotion office at Laval University. In the second half of my career, I worked as an independent marketing consultant among Canadian educational institutions before taking my retirement in 2019. Having spent my life in a sector where digital communications play a crucial role, I am particularly sensitive to the disruptions caused by the use of digital technology. Participating in the Citizens' Assembly offers me the opportunity to contribute to the creation of a vision of society based on democratic expression and a chance to influence the decisions to follow. This is what motivates me!

MARTINE **ST-LOUIS**
IQALUIT, NU

Although a native of Québec, I have spent almost half my life in Iqaluit, Nunavut. My work in education has taken me from the classroom to school principalship to director of the French Education Division of the Nunavut Department of Education. The promotion of language and culture to ensure its vitality and sustainability is at the heart of my actions. I am a fervent defender of human rights and freedom of expression, and I denounce disrespect in all its forms. It is with this in mind that I wanted to take part in the Capstone Citizens' Assembly. It is a privilege for me to be part of a think tank dedicated to democratic expression.

DAWN **SUGIMOTO**
LETHBRIDGE, AB

Born and raised in southern Alberta, I spent 20 years in print journalism at the Lethbridge Herald, where I was a finalist for a National Newspaper Award for editorial writing (2005) and served in several roles, including managing editor. Journalism provided an opportunity to explore my interests in health care, local history, and politics. In 2009, I switched careers and entered communications, first in a K-12 school system and, currently, at a postsecondary institution. I continue to have the great privilege of writing about interesting people and things.

STEPHANIE **TUCKER**
ST. JOHN'S, NL

I am a communications and marketing professional in Newfoundland and Labrador, with interests in content creation, videography, social media management, and event planning. Currently, I work for a municipal government organization, and prior to this I worked in the not-for-profit sector with an environmental education organization. I hold a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a double major in communication studies and English language and literature, and a Diploma in performance and communications media. I'm passionate about animal welfare, and my husband Daniel and I have two rescues, our dog Calvin and our cat Nacho. We love spending time with friends, kayaking, hiking, and traveling. As someone who works with digital communications on a regular basis, I see the impact that social media can have on shaping perspectives. I am excited to join the Citizens' Assembly to share and learn from others through conversation on this year's important topic.

DARA **TUGWELL**
DARTMOUTH, NS

My name is Dara Tugwell and I am a proud east coaster! I am an occupational therapist and presently work for the provincial early intervention program run through the local children's hospital. More specifically, I support several teams across the province in a variety of areas, such as clinical decision making, capacity building, and teaming/communicating with others. When not at work, I love spending time with my husband of over four years and our 20-month-old son!

I decided to participate in this Assembly as I spend a lot of time on various social media sites, and I'm hoping my level head can bring an important perspective to the group.

TIM **VINING**
TORONTO, ON

I am of Cajun francophone descent and originate from Southern Louisiana. Professionally, I have done a variety of jobs including practising as a labour lawyer with an emphasis on anti-racism and employment discrimination, teaching at the high school and university level, working as executive director of a social justice organizing centre, working as coordinator for an Indigenous women's emergency shelter in Toronto, and working as an estates analyst with the Ministry of the Attorney General. In addition, I lived with homeless men in my home state of Louisiana for over eight years. I currently work with the OPSEU Indigenous Circle as a human rights officer. My partner Steve and I have been blissfully married for 30 years.

MELANIE **WATSON**
DUNCAN, BC

I am a first-generation Canadian and grew up in a rural setting on the southern end of Vancouver Island. In my lifetime, I have gone from writing letters, listening to radio and records, and watching two channels on a black-and-white TV, to utilizing the myriad of media we have today. I have been lucky enough to participate in the 2020 and 2022 Citizens' Assemblies looking at how the use of social media is impacting the health of our democratic society and how to mitigate the harms that have come with this new way of communicating. I believe democracy is an idea that needs to be practiced and constantly examined for it to remain truly relevant for everyone (this is not something I think Canada has attained yet). I have been lucky enough to live in a few different places around the world and to have had a varied career path from musician to teacher to winery manager and book seller. My current passion is creating real spaces for the people in my local community to meet each other, including running a small cinema at my local community centre.

LAE **YEE**
LANTZVILLE, BC

My name is Lae, and I am a former resident of friendly Manitoba, who now lives on Vancouver Island with my husband. I have sat on both sides of the table as an employer and employee in a data-driven marketing discipline. I have noticed that no matter how small the conversation, it can help echo the importance of social concerns. I enjoy participating in large public forums, such as the Statistics Canada project, First Nations project, Amnesty International Vancouver chapter, Community roundtable, and was recently acquainted with the Citizens' Assembly. Outside of work, I enjoy comedy shows, radio, podcasts, and visiting local markets.

In 2018 and 2019, the McConnell Foundation and the Department of Canadian Heritage agreed to fund a three-year Commission to examine the impact of digital technologies on Canadian democracy and society.

SELECTION, PROGRAM
AND PROCESS

Understanding the Citizens' Assembly Process

The issue and response: In 2018 and 2019 respectively, the McConnell Foundation and the Department of Canadian Heritage agreed to fund a three-year Commission to examine the impact of digital technologies on Canadian democracy and society.

The institutions and regulations that safeguarded people and the public interest throughout the era of print media, landlines, cinema, and broadcast TV are less equipped to deal with this new era of digital technologies. The Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression was created to better understand, anticipate, and respond to the effects of new digital technologies on public life and Canadian democracy. The Commission was supported by a Citizens' Assembly in order to centre the voices and values of Canadians from all backgrounds and corners of this country in this discussion.

The **2020 Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression** provided advice and recommendations concerning how governments and industry should regulate digital technologies to both protect democratic expression and shield people from hatred, misinformation, and exploitation.
» Their full report can be downloaded here.

The **2021 Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression** was mandated to consider whether there should be legal penalties or other consequences for individuals and organizations that knowingly spread disinformation online with the intent to cause harm.
» Their full report can be downloaded here.

However, over the winter and spring of 2022, the Department of Canadian Heritage and its Digital Citizen Initiative adjusted their approach and convened an Expert Advisory Group on Online Safety. This group was mandated to provide the Minister of Canadian Heritage with advice on how best to design the legislative and regulatory framework to address harmful content online, and how to best incorporate the feedback the government received during the national consultation that they held in 2021 on their original legislative proposal. To expand this advisory process, the Department requested a slightly modified third citizens' assembly to review and respond to the suggestions from the Expert Advisory Group and all the work that had come before.

Capstone Assembly Recruitment

For the **2022 Capstone Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression**, members of each of the 2020 and 2021 assemblies were approached with another opportunity to volunteer. From the pool of members who elected to volunteer again, a modified lottery process was undertaken to ensure demographic representation consistent with the demographics of the population, and meeting or exceeding a minimum threshold for Indigenous representation. Given the smaller group from which this lottery occurred, a round of outreach was conducted to volunteers from the first two assemblies who were not selected, but who would help to round out the demographic profile of the Assembly.

Ultimately, 45 residents of Canada were selected and participated in the capstone assembly.

3rd Assembly | **45** Residents | **10** Sessions

MAY
24

MAY
25*

MAY
26

JUN
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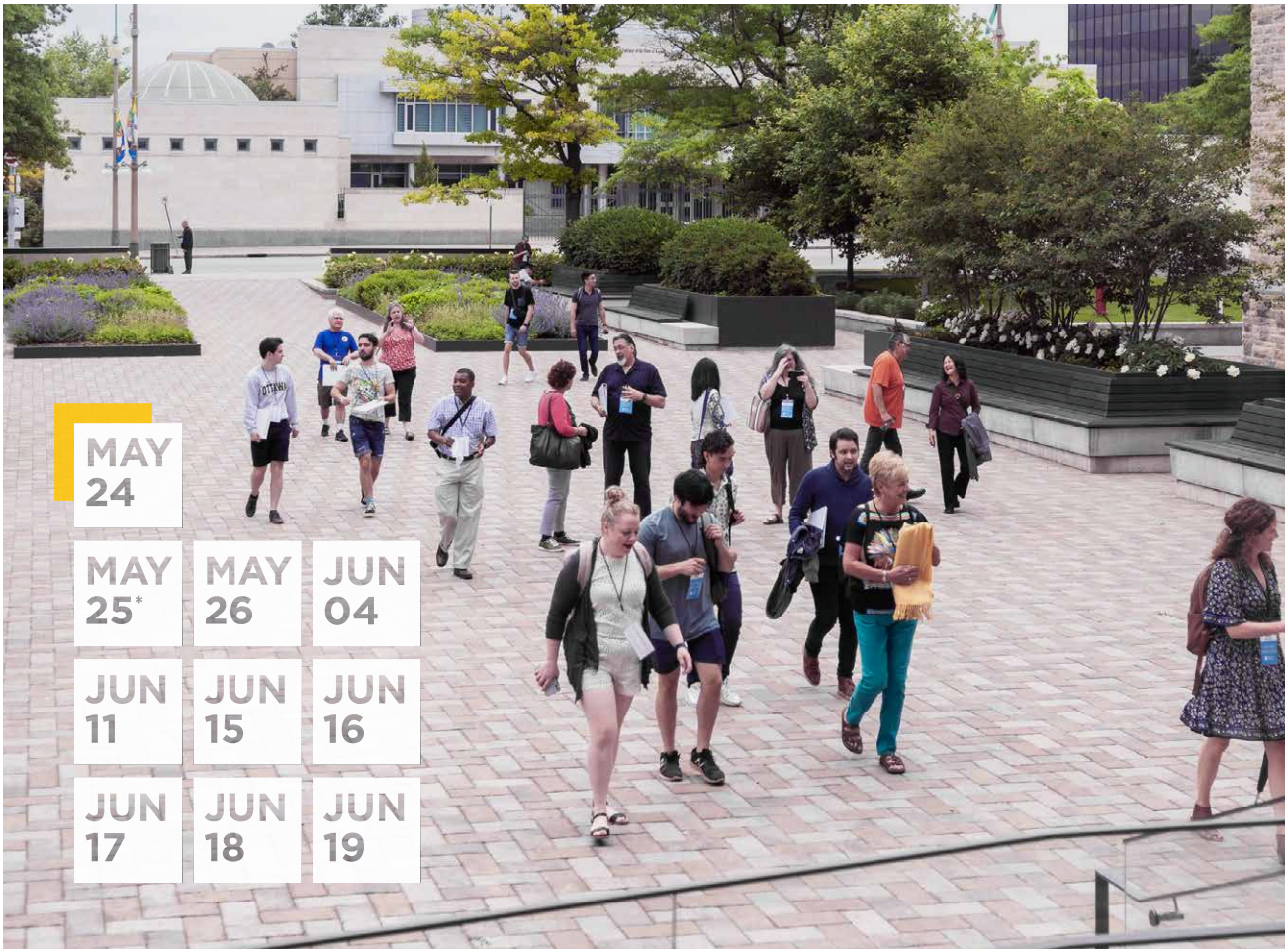
Capstone Assembly Program and Process

MAY 24-26, 2022

[May 24 & 26 in English, May 25 in French]

The orientation sessions were hosted by Assembly Chair **Peter MacLeod** in English and co-host **Émilie Hervieux** in French. Members were briefed about the mandate and program schedule, and encouraged to share if and how, their thoughts on regulating online spaces had changed since last participating in the Assembly.

The orientation briefed panelists on the process followed by the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) in developing legislation to regulate digital technologies; the products that have resulted from this process; and the Assembly's role in consolidating, reinforcing, or revising the many different views that have emerged thus far. Members learned that the original regulatory framework proposed by PCH last summer was met with strong pushback, forcing them to go back to the drawing board and engage a panel of experts to suggest adjustments to the proposal.

Members were invited to share their views in plenary on the following two questions:

1. *How has your perspective on the regulation of digital technologies changed since you joined the Assembly?*

- All members reinforced the desire to see some regulation on online platforms and under-lined the need to act urgently. Some members wished to see less restrictive regulation so that freedom of expression could be upheld, and favoured education and/or incentives to transform users into informed consumers of digital technologies.

- Suggestions voiced by members included high levels of transparency on how algorithms promote posts and people online, and ways to identify credentials of information sources.

- Concerns were raised about the complexity of the task and the challenges of persevering in what members perceive as an anti-regulatory environment.

- A few members also spoke of the benefits of collaborating with other jurisdictions like the US and EU, rather than attempting to develop a unique domestic regulatory framework.

2. *What are you most keen to discuss in Ottawa?*

- The theme that members touched on repeatedly was regulation to protect children from online harms. Other groups deemed vulnerable were senior citizens and the less tech-savvy.

- Members were also keen to discuss educational initiatives for all age groups — and many acknowledged the important role of digital services in weathering the pandemic.

SESSION #2: **SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2022**

Assembly Chair Peter MacLeod and co-host Émilie Hervieux began the first session by welcoming members and explaining the Assembly's mandate. **Laura McPhie**, a member of the Pikwakanagan First Nation, was invited to deliver the land acknowledgment and discuss how Indigenous ways of knowing could inform the work of the Assembly in considering notions of decolonization and obligations towards future generations.

The session featured one presentation by **Michel Sabbagh**, Director General of Broadcasting, Copyright, and Creative Marketplace at the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) followed by a question and answer session. Sabbagh described the challenge of developing a sound regulatory framework and what his team had learned from their first proposal which was released in 2021.

He also described what he hoped to learn from the work of the newly convened Expert Group as well as the Citizens' Assembly. Later in the session, members joined small group discussions to share their impressions of Sabbagh's overview and to debate the balance between user accountability and platform accountability.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

3. *What struck you about Sabbagh's presentation and the government's efforts to promote online safety?*

- While members welcomed the government's focus on mitigating online harms, many felt that regulation was overdue and urged the government to move quickly to enact regulations.

- Most members agreed on the challenge of striking the right balance and developing a regulatory framework that was equal to the challenge of reducing the prevalence of online harms without becoming too heavy-handed or reducing innovation and market competition. Some groups expressed concern that a risk-based approach may not be sufficient to meaningfully reduce the prevalence of online harms, while others observed that certain harms, like hate speech, are difficult to define.

- Members strongly felt that the framework should include measures to combat fake accounts, ensure individual accountability, and mandate algorithm transparency.

4. What should be the balance between platform accountability and user accountability? And what mechanisms do you believe are most effective In creating that accountability?

- While members agreed that accountability should be shared between users and platforms, there was no clarity on how consequences for harmful actions while still providing users with the option of using some services anonymously. One group suggested that platforms might be able to hold users accountable by expanding their community guidelines if they are provided with a clear and culturally nuanced framework of what is and isn't acceptable in Canada.

- User education was unanimously commended as a way to foster civility in online spaces. Members also stressed the need to amplify diverse voices.

- Many members insisted that platforms need to be transparent about the bots and fake accounts that drive engagement on disinformation and harmful content, as well as the algorithms that boost that content. It was also suggested that more public knowledge of how platforms track and blacklist bad actors could deter users from violating guidelines.

Assembly Chair and host **Peter MacLeod** began by recapping what members had heard in the previous session and reiterating the questions that Canadian Heritage wanted members to consider.

Namely:

- Do you think an approach based on platform risk assessment and mitigation is effective? Why or why not?

- Do you find that this approach balances online safety with the protection of freedom of expression and privacy?

- Which companies do you think should be subject to these obligations?

- Do you believe that certain harmful content should be subject to stricter obligations (e.g. material depicting the sexual exploitation of children or content relating to hate crimes, terrorism or violence)?

He reminded members that the task of this capstone assembly was to review the set of recommendations and commentary generated by different components of the government's framework development process and advise on the direction that the government must take to strengthen online safety and protect user rights. He then highlighted some of the ideas proposed by each of the previous Citizens' Assemblies, the 2020 and 2021 Commissions, and the Expert Group.

During the Q&A some members voiced concern that a risk-based approach would rely too much on platforms and should be supplemented by broader user control options.

Members were then split into six facilitator-led breakout groups to discuss the following three questions:

5. *What could the digital service providers' "duty to act responsibly" include?*

- Members agreed that platforms must acknowledge the true risks they pose and create an environment that discourages all forms of harmful behaviour (e.g., by gathering basic data even on anonymous profiles to track bad actors, offering controls for users to opt out of interacting with anonymous profiles, etc). Platforms should implement better mechanisms to report harmful content and to hold individuals accountable.

- Many groups insisted on more platform transparency, especially with regard to what data is being collected from users and for what purposes. It was also felt that platforms must explicitly seek consent (user opt-in) to share data rather than make it default.

- Some groups felt it was the platforms' duty to educate users. The need for accessible plain language when conveying codes of conduct and terms of usage was frequently emphasized.

- Some members urged platforms to do more to protect children, seniors, and other vulnerable groups.

6. *What could the user's "duty to act responsibly" include?*

- It was agreed that the users' primary duty was to treat social media spaces like public spaces and refrain from behaviours that aren't allowed in the real world. Members stressed the need to be respectful, honest, discerning, educated, and tolerant.

- Some members noted that users should educate other users, especially children and seniors, to be better informed of and to protect themselves from the harms prevalent online.

- There was some debate about anonymity — while necessary for some constituencies to speak up without fear of reprisal, this is also a convenient way for bad actors to conceal their identities.

7. *On balance, should digital service providers and users have a duty to act responsibly online?*

- All groups agreed that both go hand-in-hand — although some felt platforms have more responsibility as they employ the algorithms and bots that allow harmful content or disinformation to go viral.

SESSION #4:   **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022**

On June 15th, the members of the capstone Assembly reconvened in Ottawa for their in-person meetings.

Over dinner, they were addressed by the Minister of Heritage **Pablo Rodriguez** who shared his appreciation for the members' work. He explained how this process fits into his government's wider legislative agenda which includes new measures to ensure online streaming includes Canadian content and that Canadian news organizations benefit monetarily when their content is shared on social media platforms.

He emphasized that there is much Canada can learn from other jurisdictions and was pleased the Assembly would have the opportunity to hear first hand from representatives of the EU and other jurisdictions. He sought to reassure the members that he would read their recommendations closely as would his team and that they are providing a vital public service to Canadians and the government.

The Assembly then heard from **Brian Bohunicky**, Vice-President of Policy at the Public Policy Forum, who also thanked the members for their service and recognized the challenge of developing effective digital regulations.

Over dinner, members got to know each other by sharing where they were from, why they had decided to volunteer, and what they were hoping to contribute to the Assembly.

After dinner, the members heard from **Professor Taylor Owen**, co-chair of the Commission on Democratic Expression and a member of the government's Expert Group. Professor Owen discussed his recent experience as a member of the Expert Group and how new approaches to digital regulation continued to evolve — even over the course of the past two years. To this end, he outlined the key features of a risk-based approach before answering a wide range of questions from the members.

JUN 16

ON ON
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The first full day of working sessions began with greetings from **Meredith Preston McGhie**, Secretary-General of the Global Centre for Pluralism where the assembly conducted its proceedings. Ms. McGhie spoke of her appreciation for the Algonquin people and acknowledged that the Centre is situated on their traditional and unceded territory. She described the value of pluralism in an uncertain and polarized world, and wished the members well in their deliberations.

The Assembly was then addressed by **Professor Wendy Hui Kyong Chun**, Simon Fraser University's Canada 150 Research Chair in New Media and head of their Digital Democracies Institute. Professor Chun discussed how liberal societies can flourish in the digital age and examined the values shaping technology and its regulation. She explained the origins and early days of the internet and described how privacy has always been at odds with greater digital connectivity.

Next, the members heard from **Danielle Paradis**, a Métis journalist, educator, and podcaster who works at the Indigenous Friends Association. Ms. Paradis discussed her ideas for decolonizing digital spaces and incorporating Indigenous worldviews in digital regulations. She described the Tipi Protocols that her organization uses when developing digital tools and the importance of prioritizing community safety alongside performance.

After a short break, the members reconvened to consider the values that should guide the government's approach to digital regulation. They reviewed the values stated by both previous assemblies and considered: Which are most important? Which should be removed or restated? And whether there were any values they wanted to add.

The afternoon session began with presentations from two Commissioners from the Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression. **Amira Elghawaby** from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation discussed her experience on both the 2020 and 2021 Commissions and, more personally, as a racialized user of the internet. She shared elements of the 2020 Commission's six point approach to regulation. **Nathalie Des Rosiers**, Principal of Massey College and a member of the second Commission described the concept at the core of the Commission's recommendations: a legislative duty to act responsibly. She also spoke about the importance of increasing operational transparency and algorithmic disclosure. Like many other speakers, she acknowledged the tensions to be weighed between over-censoring and unlimited freedom of expression.

The Assembly members then heard from two members of the current Expert Advisory Group on online safety. **Professor Emily Laidlaw**, Canada Research Chair in Cybersecurity Law and Associate Professor at the University of Calgary in the Faculty of Law, is also the co-chair of the Expert Group. She addressed the issues that the group covered including the role of a potential digital services regulator and the types of content it could aim to regulate. Professor Laidlaw, like others, described the risk-based approach that the Expert Group considered and preferred. She discussed the use of risk-assessments that could examine a range of possible concerns including alignment with human rights codes and specific impacts on children or other vulnerable or historically marginalized communities. She also underscored that the government must act quickly and took care to differentiate between the most egregious harms that are currently subject to targeted legislation, and those more generalized harms including bullying and harassment which the panel discussed at length. Next, **Professor David Morin**, full professor at the School of Applied Politics of the Université de Sherbrooke, and a fellow member of the Expert Group addressed the Assembly via Zoom. He shared his respect for the process the advisory group took and the challenges of trying to find clear and appropriate solutions for the issues surfaced in their conversations. He focused on the risks of extremist behaviour and terrorism content and urged the Assembly to consider questions of national security and radicalization.

The Assembly members then worked in small groups to discuss what they liked and disliked about the approach and recommendations proposed by both Commissions and the Expert Group. They also spent some time considering what these groups might have overlooked that the Assembly should address.

Following a break, the Assembly reconvened for dinner and a virtual presentation by three speakers representing different perspectives on the policy issues surrounding online regulation. First, the group heard from **Dr. Brenda McPhail**, from the Canadian Civil Liberties Association on the importance of freedom of expression for the promotion of civil and democratic rights. Then they heard from **Supriya Dwivedi**, from the Max Bell School's Centre for Media, Technology and Democracy at McGill University. Ms. Dwivedi spoke about her own personal experiences with online harms and argued for the values of a risk-based approach that empowers users and imposes obligations of transparency and accountability on platforms. Finally, they were addressed by **Evan Balgord** from the Canadian Anti-Hate Network on the substantial harms perpetrated through online mechanisms, especially targeting more vulnerable and historically marginalized populations, and the chilling effect that online hate rhetoric has on free expression. He also shared the challenges of using existing policing and regulatory structures to try to manage those harms. Mr. Balgord shared his organization's proposal for an Ombudsman's office that could hear complaints from victims, investigate the practices of social media companies, and issue recommendations.

JUN 17

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY
DEMOCRATIC EXPRESS

SESSION #6:   FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 2022

Friday's session began with some reflections from the members on the previous day's work, and **each member sharing three words** that encapsulated priorities for them for the work of the Assembly. While a wide variety of words were shared, "accountability", "transparency", and "education" were some of the most frequent.

With their priorities now top of mind, the members broke into small groups to review the recommendations from the previous two Assemblies and Commissions and sort them against their lists of likes, dislikes, as well as what they believed ere missing elements from the previous day.

After a break, three presenters joined by Zoom to share perspectives from three different jurisdictions. **Dylan Sparks** from Reset UK, discussed the UK's Online Safety Bill and its challenges and successes. He explained that the UK has adopted an open-ended approach to regulation that gives a high degree of discretion to Britain's communications regulator to examine different facets of a company's operations and names eighteen specific harms which companies must act to mitigate.

Professor Heidi Tworek, Associate Professor of International History and Public Policy at the University of British Columbia, and member of the Expert Advisory Group, who has made a close study of the German approach to content moderation shared the recent setback Germany has had with their Network Enforcement Act and their strict take-down approach. She described the origins of the German approach which was rooted in the experience of the second world war and longstanding prohibitions against hate speech. These sensitivities led the German government to enact a 24 hour take down policy which critics feared resulted in overly censorious actions by tech companies to avoid the potential of heavy fines. Recently, the law was challenged in the German court which found the approach to be unconstitutional. Tworek explained that this approach combined with some technological limitations made it a very challenging model to calibrate and adopt.

Finally, **Prabhat Agarwal**, Head of Unit "Digital Services and Platforms" at the European Commission's DG CONNECT shared details on the Digital Services Act and the specifics of the regulatory approach that the EU is taking. He described the multi year efforts within the European Commission to define the objectives of the DSA and put in place a very detailed legislation that will oblige digital service providers to enact a range of safeguards that aim to enhance user privacy and control while also increasing the mandatory disclosures tech companies will need to make to increase public oversight. Mr. Agarwal emphasized the importance of clarity in the legislation on specifying the exact nature of the disclosure recommendations and regulations put forth to the platforms.

Following lunch, Assembly members once again broke into small groups, this time self-selecting their group according to themes that had emerged in the morning. These themes were: Education, Decolonization, Types of Content, Recourse & Accountability, User Control, Empowerment and Anonymity, Risk Assessment and Transparency Reporting, Penalties and Liabilities, and the Role of the Regulator. The bulk of the day's work focused on refining existing recommendations to better align with this Assembly's thinking and crafting new recommendations to fill in specific gaps.

That evening, the members took a well-deserved night off.

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2022

The day began with presentations from representatives from Meta (Facebook's parent company) and Google. **Rachel Curran**, Public Policy Manager, Canada at Meta addressed the ways in which Meta works to regulate their platform both proactively and reactively. **Colin McKay**, Head, Government Affairs and Public Policy at Google, explained some of the ways that user data is an essential component of the company's business model, but that privacy and protections are a significant concern.

Both representatives shared details on their company's existing Community Guidelines or Codes of Conduct in an attempt to clarify the work they do above and beyond what is required of them by law. Furthermore, both representatives clearly stated that their companies are eager for the government to step in further to regulate the online environment and provide clarity with respect to public expectations.

The remainder of the day was spent entirely focused on refining recommendations, finding consensus and ensuring all Assembly members had an opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations as they evolved. Additionally, members returned to the work of defining the values that would help to orient their approach overall.

In the evening, the members were delighted to meet with the co-chair of the Commission on Democratic Expression and former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, the **Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin**. McLachlin re-affirmed the necessity to take serious steps to impose appropriate regulations on digital technologies. She helped the members appreciate the historical context to bringing regulation to areas that had previously not been regulated such as seatbelts and indoor smoking, and reminded the members that societal attitudes can shift relatively quickly to accommodate the needs of the times.

SESSION #8: **SUNDAY, JUNE 19, 2022**

On the final day, the Assembly convened in the majestic O'Born Room at the National Arts Centre, which stands opposite Parliament and the National War Memorial. Here the members spent their last two hours preparing introductory text which would help the reader understand their motivations and objectives.

At 11:00 am, the Assembly welcomed a number of guests from the Department of Canadian Heritage as well as other ministries. Standing at a podium, the members took turns reading out sections of their report before receiving the appreciation of a departmental representative and accepting a certificate of public service.

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CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON
DEMOCRATIC EXPRESSION

Why this Matters

As members of the final Canadian Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression, we worry that the internet has connected us virtually, but disconnected us from the real world and each other. We are more integrated with people globally, but often more isolated from the people right around us.

It has brought people with similar opinions together, but has pushed people with diverse opinions further apart.

The internet has amplified what is good in the world but also, regrettably, hate.

Online harms can — and do — lead to real world mental, physical, and societal harms.

The current digital environment impacts vulnerable and marginalized communities to a higher degree. A lack of digital literacy leaves children and seniors particularly susceptible to harm.

There are cracks in society and some people are using the internet to make them wider. We need to do the 'roadwork' and repairs to fix those cracks.

We are years behind other jurisdictions such as Germany, the UK, and the EU on policy development in this area. It is important for us to start right now to get towards a better future.

We would like to see real change and we need to act, together, as a society.

We need to get going, even if it means starting small.

The internet and digital technologies are moving quickly and we must catch up and adapt by implementing some regulations to protect and empower Canadians.

We want a less polarized society which includes healthy dialogue between people with diverse perspectives.

We believe our democracy is under threat and know that a flourishing, vibrant digital ecosystem can be an essential component of a healthy and more respectful society.

Why We Volunteered

We volunteered to fulfill what we believe is our civic duty and ensure that the voices of all people residing in Canada regardless of gender, belief and geography are represented. We wanted to learn more about the digital world and the public and private mechanisms in place to address misinformation and harmful content.

We volunteered to participate in the creation of a safer digital world for current and future generations. We wanted to see the evolution of the work done by the Citizens' Assemblies on Democratic Expression and, ultimately, the Assemblies' impact on policies.

Finally, we are eager to see how the Canadian government will implement our recommendations.

What We've Learned

We've come to appreciate that freedom of speech is not absolute and must be tempered with responsibility, especially when we have online platforms whose design, especially around amplification, results in an increased risk of harm.

As we understand the dangers of absolute freedom of speech and the abuse that this can bring, we also recognize that freedom of expression allows us to reformulate, criticize and revitalize our systems of belief through genuine discussions when those systems have become outdated.

Democracy and freedom of expression are symbiotic. You can't have one without the other. Diversity of thought, and the ability of diverse voices to be heard, and heard equally, reinvigorates participation and spurs change in democratic systems.

We have learned there is a heartening level of cooperation occurring across democratic countries. We are not alone. We are learning from each other. The time is right and interest is high to change our online experiences for the better.

We have learned the difference between takedown and risk assessment processes; the latter provides a proactive approach and a promising path forward. We are observing harms done by the existing business models and algorithmic systems of content amplification which motivate the user to stay online longer. This model's sole goal of profit from advertising sales comes at a detrimental cost, and with great disregard, to the well-being of our society.

We have observed the harms done by existing systems of amplification with often the sole goal of profit in mind, disregarding the effects on society. The problems and harms created by the purposeful designs of the current systems are the reason we are here. These systems are highly flawed and we know work can be done to shape systems for different, and better, outcomes.

Users must be empowered through data ownership and portability and inclusive and ethical practices. Collectively, users can positively influence platform regulations. Ownership rights will change the game.

Decolonization of the platforms is also a priority. Platforms must fight against a colonial approach for Indigenous and other underrepresented voices to be effectively and appropriately heard. Furthermore, basic access to the internet across Canada is pivotal for underrepresented communities' digital literacy and connection.

The path forward includes the creation of a regulatory framework that continues to improve with time as has been done in the UK, EU and Germany. This is a digital revolution and it will take time for us to adjust our systems to get the most benefit.

There is no need to be fatalistic. There are reasons for optimism. Let's not assume that the online experience of which we are witnesses is the way it has to be.

Values

1. Access

Greater access would ensure diverse voices and perspectives are represented. All Canadians deserve equal access to affordable, reliable, good-quality and high-speed internet regardless of economic circumstance, geographic location or physical ability. Digital exclusion through the form of weak or unavailable broadband is a serious constraint to democracy.

2. Transparency

Transparency ensures the open availability of information about the rationale or intent behind the policies and mechanisms used by platforms. This information must be presented in a way that is user-friendly and concise thereby encouraging societal trust and empowering users, researchers and decision-makers to make informed choices.

3. Accountability

Both individuals and platforms must be held accountable for mitigating risks arising from the propagation of harmful speech, disinformation, misinformation, and for the data security and privacy protection of users. Consequences should vary proportionately

based on scale of infraction and type of perpetrator. Consequences should mirror penalties incurred for infractions in other media (e.g. print or broadcasting).

4. Diverse Voices

Digital technologies should help to amplify rather than suppress diverse voices. The internet can be the basis for a global community that acknowledges and celebrates differences, recognizing its social impact and its impact on vulnerable individuals and groups. This community will be stronger when all voices feel welcome and act respectfully towards others.

5. Expression

A more democratic internet is needed; one that recognizes that free expression includes the right to dissent within the bounds of the law, as allowed by the Canadian Charter, while at the same time allowing its users to express and empower themselves — without infringing on the rights of others.

6. Safety and Security

The internet and digital platforms should be safe and secure environments for all Canadians to responsibly and freely express themselves and share information and ideas with minimal exposure to harmful speech and actions. This is especially important for groups and individuals who are most at risk of being targeted negatively.

Trust between platforms, service providers and users is built through a clear ethical framework with respect to content that is shared, ensuring the digital security and privacy of users, and protecting user data and personal information.

7. Dynamic

Policies and strategies must change to meet current and future needs. These policies and strategies should be adaptable and subject to routine evaluation and review as technology evolves.

→ A. Role of Regulator

Self-regulation isn't working, and digital service providers themselves concede that government regulation is overdue. Similarly, the courts are often too slow or unable to address malfeasance and the range of harms that occur online. This is why a well funded and resourced Digital Services Regulator (DSR) should be established at arm's length from government to establish standards for the safe operation of digital services, and enforce compliance.

We also believe that an Ombudsperson's Office should be established as a separate, impartial entity tasked with collecting user complaints and amplifying the voice and concerns of Canadians. This Office should also have responsibility for leading public awareness and education campaigns that are responsive to the trends and hazards they see.

Recommendations:

1. **The Government of Canada** should establish a new, arm's-length and impartial Digital Services Regulator (DSR) that can establish regulations and standards that ensure a competitive marketplace for digital services that are conducive to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of a democratic society.

    a. Like other public agencies, the Digital Services Regulator should report to Parliament. It should also be insulated from political and market pressures by strong governance mechanisms that ensure its independence and ability to work in the public interest without interference. As the lead agency for digital regulation, the DSR should collaborate with relevant agencies including the Competition Bureau and Office of the Privacy Commissioner to advance its goals.

    b. The Regulator should regularly consult stakeholders including members of the public, researchers, and legal and industry representatives. The Regulator should also work in close collaboration with law enforcement agencies to address online criminal activity including but not limited to terrorism, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation.

    c. The Digital Services Regulator should provide reports to Parliament twice a year, or as needed, concerning the state of digital services and the risks posed to Canadians. This document should be written for a public audience and be widely communicated to the public in order to spur attention and debate.

d. The Digital Services Regulator should have the authority to initiate investigations based on reasonable evidence of a breach of standards as well as to conduct compliance audits.

e. The Digital Services Regulator should be empowered to examine, at its discretion, algorithms employed by digital service providers. Similarly, it should be empowered to:

    ▪ Develop additional policies to promote algorithmic transparency that allow users to understand why they are served specific content.

    ▪ Develop and promote compliance with principles for responsible and ethical algorithmic development and applications.

    ▪ Develop guidelines grounded in Canadian law and jurisprudence that define harmful and hateful speech.

f. The Digital Services Regulator should ensure that digital service providers comply with Canadian laws and regulations, as well as their own codes of conduct, and are held accountable for the dissemination of harmful and hateful speech, and for their own systemic failures to use due diligence in moderating content and restraining abusive users.

g. The Digital Services Regulator should be empowered to levy fines for breaches to standards and orders, and require compliance audits that demonstrate adherence to Canadian laws and regulations.

h. The Digital Services Regulator should develop special regulations to severely restrict the collection, storage, and sale of data related to online users who have not yet reached the age of majority.

i. The Digital Services Regulator should have the power to seize and retain data for the purpose of its investigations.

j. The Digital Services Regulator shall ensure that whistleblowers are strongly protected and will act as the office to whom employees of digital service providers, representatives of governments, and other parties can report concerns regarding operational processes and procedures.

2. The **Ombudsperson's Office** will have a different set of responsibilities. The Office will:

a. Collect complaints and forward concerns to the DSR for their audit and reviewing.

b. Compile and publish an annual report detailing the number, nature and outcomes of complaints, while also publishing special reports where and when there is a clear public interest or urgency.

c.   Conduct public awareness and educational campaigns.

d.   Using funds provided by digital service providers, supply information and resources to individuals seeking redress for harms experienced online.

3.   We urge the **federal government** to appoint a special envoy to liaise at an international level on online harms and disinformation. Advocating on behalf of Canadians, the envoy will foster dialogue with social media platforms, foreign governments, and multilateral bodies in an effort to identify threats as well as opportunities to cooperate on solutions to the global challenges.

4.   We ask the **federal government** to play a leading role in the creation of a global forum, which the envoy would be part of, for the purpose of securing greater international cooperation and agreements to reduce the prevalence of online harm.

→ B. Risk Assessment and Transparency Reporting

An important objective of the Assembly is to reduce the prevalence of online harms. While content moderation is a worthwhile pursuit, it has limits. It can be difficult to define thresholds for the purpose of moderating content. It can also be difficult to provide effective content moderation given the scale at which many platforms operate.

Consequently, the Assembly agrees that much greater emphasis should be placed on the responsibility of digital service providers to conduct risk assessments.

Similarly, digital service providers should also work to secure the trust of Canadians through expanded transparency reporting. These reports should be produced by digital service providers on a determined schedule. Digital service providers must also be responsive to the Regulator when additional information is required.

Recommendations:

5.   The **Regulator** should require the platforms to conduct regular risk assessments determined by their service and risk profile. Risk assessments could consider, for instance, the likelihood of hate speech or inciting violence, as well as the likely impact for marginalized groups, alignment with human rights norms, and the likelihood of specific individual and group harms.

6.   In conducting risk assessments, the digital service provider should identify each potential harm they have addressed and the factors considered in addressing it. They should also state all mitigation strategies that were implemented per harm. If relevant, they must justify their decisions not to address any remaining identified harms and clarify the rationale for this decision.

7. Digital service providers will be required to disclose, via the Regulator, their practices in regards to the collection, storage, and usage of user data along with the design and inner workings of their algorithms. This will allow for tiered access for the DSR, researchers, and other constituencies to examine the psychological, social, and other relevant impacts of providers' practices.

8. Recognizing that digital service providers vary widely, the requirement to conduct risk assessments and transparency reporting should take into account their services, scale, resources, and risk profile. This provides for graduated reporting requirements that can fairly accommodate providers' differences.

9. Smaller digital service providers should be incentivised to increase their risk assessment and transparency reporting through mechanisms such as being listed in a formal recognition program.

→ C. Types of Content

We believe freedom of expression is a cornerstone of our democracy that allows for a wide variety of opinions to be expressed without fear of reprisal, and promotes the evolution of thought and belief. We worry that regulating expression and speech will unintentionally silence people who need a voice the most.

We agree with the **Expert Advisory Group** that there are two types of content to be concerned about. Group A is content that is already considered illegal in the Canadian Criminal Code: hate speech, the sexual exploitation of children, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, terrorism and the incitement to violence (not imminent). Group B is content that is 'lawful but awful' and includes cyberbullying, misinformation, and disinformation. We believe that Group A content needs to be actively monitored, and that there should be rapid takedown mechanisms in place for content related to the sexual exploitation of children and non-consensual sharing of intimate images. However, we need to consider 'upstream' preventative measures as much as possible to address the issues of hate speech, incitement to violence which is not imminent, and potential terrorism content, as well as Class B content.

Recognizing both the benefits offered by anonymity and the potential harms of such, a system allowing users to verify their identity should be considered. Enrollment in such an identity verification system should be voluntary, and it should take into account equity considerations such as the difficulty of obtaining official identification for marginalized Canadians.

<u>Recommendations</u>:

We urge the **government** to:

10. Develop a 'tiered' takedown system with a focus on removing child sexual abuse material, and intimate images that have been shared without consent. This content is easier to assess and would need to be taken down within 24hrs or flagging.

    A second tier would focus on other harmful content, already considered illegal under Canadian law: hate speech, incitement to violence, and terrorism. Content to be taken down would be prioritized on its potential harm, reach, and engagement, with the same priorities being investigated for reposts.

11. Create a voluntary national verification system that verifies users' identities. Users and digital service providers/platforms could choose to participate in this system.

    For government bodies, education institutions, and companies this would be a way to validate a user's information. Digital service providers can choose what degree of verification they require of users who use their services. Users could choose their level of privacy regarding their own verification and choose which other users they would like to engage with (e.g. users could choose to only interact with users whose identities have been verified).

12. Promote interdisciplinary research that examines the spread of digital information, misinformation, and disinformation: understanding how it happens, who is most targeted and impacted, potential harms and how to avoid them.

13. Draw from the Criminal Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to create a guide that explains and clarifies digital offences as they relate to digital technologies and speech. This guide should be written in clear, concise language, available in many different languages, and widely publicized and accessible to all Canadians.

14. Create an industry-funded Public Awareness Fund. The amount digital service providers will be required to contribute should be based on the size of their user base. The fund will pay for media campaigns and educational programs that raise awareness around digital and media literacy.

→ **D. User Control, Empowerment and Anonymity**

Online platforms have increased polarization and fractured human connections. Instead of waiting for regulators to protect Canadians from online harms, or expecting platforms to act in our best interest, users should have more control over their online experience so they can tackle problematic content as it arises. Our vision of user empowerment includes data ownership, easier identification of bots and the ability to control what content we see. While recognizing that there will continue to be harms stemming from the use of anonymous accounts online, we do not recommend legislating how platforms manage anonymity.

Recommendations:

15. Citizens are the rightful owners of their data. We recommend the Regulator require an annual report from digital service providers on collected personal data.

16. We require platforms to ensure security of all collected personal data. Only data necessary for basic provider functionality should be collected.

17. We believe that users should have the choice to opt-in to the full collection of their personal data and that opting-out should be the default option. We recommend that the Regulator requires users to explicitly consent to data collection and use, and users should not be penalized by the digital service providers should they not consent to do so.

18. Minors' data should be subject to stricter data protection laws, and include the prevention of sale and sharing of this data.

19. We require platforms' terms of service to be in clear and precise language.

20. We require platforms to provide users with easily accessible tools to report content that doesn't meet community standards and terms of use. The Digital Services Regulator must also provide users easily accessible tools to report content that causes abuse or harm.

21. We require platforms to obtain informed consent before any targeted content based on obtained user data is displayed. Platforms must provide transparency on the displayed content, including an indication of who paid for it and why the user is seeing it.

22. We require platforms to ensure interoperability between platforms and to facilitate user data portability.

23. Users must have full control over the content they see, including the choice for more Canadian content.

24. Individuals under the age of 16 should not be subject to targeted advertising or content at any time.

25. We recommend the Digital Services Regulator require digital platforms to identify bots and eliminate those that amplify disinformation or inflammatory messages.

26. Bots do not have a right to freedom of expression. Bot accounts must be labelled. Users must be notified when they interact with an automated or bot account.

27. Bots on social platforms must be prohibited from modifying content, including retweeting, liking, commenting or sharing for the purposes of amplifying or silencing content.

→ E. Recourse & Accountability

Users and platforms must be accountable and take responsibility for the harms they cause. Recourse and accountability must be built into how our digital ecosystem will evolve. Platforms know their responsibility to their shareholders. We think they must also be reminded of their responsibility to their users.

Both responsibility and accountability, together and separately, reinforce user trust in the system. Most other elements of living in a society have recourse mechanisms, they need to be included in our online lives as well.

Recommendations:

28. Platform companies must assume responsibility for harmful content that appears within their domains and acknowledge their responsibility is greater than just a duty to their shareholders or even compliance with minimum standards of law. As part of their role in the greater public interest, they have a duty to act responsibly. Users, too, have a duty to act responsibly and need to be accountable where they cause harm or threaten risk of harm.

29. In appreciation of the ever-evolving nature of digital technologies, both platforms and government ought to continuously review and update policies and laws and create robust mechanisms, including citizen committees, to engage with Canadians and ensure that future policies are shaped with public input.

30. We urge the creation of an inventory of resources, tools, and processes to help people understand and recover from the impacts of digital harms. We believe the platforms have a duty to contribute to funding some of these resources which could be administered and managed by the Ombudsperson's Office as per recommendation A.2.c.

31. We recommend a system of recourse along a continuum that is available to those persons or communities who feel that their expression has been unduly restricted and those who feel they have been harmed.

    Such a system could take the following approach:

    - Where a post gets flagged by either the platform or a user the platform must immediately assess to determine whether suspension of the post is warranted.

    - If suspension is deemed warranted, the post's content will be made temporarily opaque and cannot be shared.

    - If there is a dispute, the disputing parties have access to the intervention and attention of a third party adjudicator, an office independent from, but funded by, the platforms.

    - If the dispute is not resolved, the dispute is promptly referred to a mediation process funded by the platform.

    - If there continues to be no resolution, then the dispute is promptly referred to an e-court system established under the umbrella of the Digital Services Regulator.

→ F. Penalties and Liabilities

We believe any system of digital regulation must involve penalties and liabilities for both digital service providers and users who break the law, fail to comply with the Digital Service Regular, breach their duties to act responsibly or act in ways contrary to codes of conduct and practice.

Recommendations:

32. Empower the Regulator to assess compliance and levy fines and penalties, while also referring, when warranted, specific matters to law enforcement agencies.

33. Following the example of regulated financial institutions, we believe the government should strongly consider making the corporate directors of digital service providers liable for failures to act responsibly.

34. Finally, and as a last resort, in order to protect Canadians where there is extensive criminal activity and a clear public interest to do so, the Digital Services Regulator should be empowered to sever the ability of a digital service provider to operate in Canada.

35. The Digital Services Regulator should also ensure that user codes of conduct define penalties for non-compliance, which can include account suspension, permanent loss of service, and referral to law enforcement.

36. All fines and penalties levied by the Digital Services Regulator should be communicated by public notice in an effort to promote further compliance and ensure the public is well informed about failures to comply.

→ G. Education

The Federal Government has a responsibility to provide digital literacy for all Canadians. Digital literacy enables all Canadians to be aware of the potential negative impacts of, and make informed decisions about, their online activity. Those potential negative impacts could include:

- vulnerability of personal information online
- the impacts of online behaviour on others and on themselves, and
- potential victimization.

Recommendations:

37. Create and resource a national, independent body to develop and lead initiatives supporting all Canadians to be aware of, and informed about, online activity. These initiatives must be developed in collaboration with community leaders, cultural groups, provincial and territorial education systems, and public health, to reflect diverse needs. The initiatives must reach all Canadians, regardless of race, age, language, location, abilities, culture, socio-economic status, gender identity or sexual orientation. As per recommendation A.2.c this body could be run through the Ombudperson's office.

38. Develop a public education campaign on misinformation/disinformation, online civil discourse skills, data privacy and online safety that is highly visible, engaging and accessible to all Canadian citizens and that uses a range of media, in line with recommendation C.14.

39. Invest in quality information and verifiable journalism at the national, regional and community levels. News articles should contain identifiers making them easier to track and validate.

→ # H. Decolonization and Inclusion

In developing approaches to mitigating online harms and protecting user rights, it is essential to consider Canada's political and social contexts, both historically and currently.

It is important to recognize that certain dominant constructs, stemming from colonial practices, are being built into and normalized in our online lives. Among these are American and Eurocentric understandings of community standards for expression and codes of conduct. Within current online structures, from the design of the digital public space to the production of knowledge, there are communities that remain unseen and unheard. These communities are not considered in the development of community standards; their presence is minimized, discounted, silenced; the harms they have experienced, and continue to experience, are not accounted for.

In addition, we identify a concerning new "digital or internet colonialism", where all Canadians who are online are having their data mined and used in what can be described as a new era of "digital resource extraction" by private companies. In this new era of digital resource extraction, Canadians who experience the impacts of colonialism, systemic racism and other systematic barriers in real world contexts further experience these in the digital sphere, and may in fact experience amplified harms.

In order to create a more equitable society with empowered online users, we recommend embedding intentional decolonization approaches while reviewing our assembly's proposed recommendations and when creating and implementing any subsequent policy and legislation.

Recommendations:

40. The current infrastructure and access to online spaces results in prejudice which is weakening democratic expression and participation. We recommend that the Canadian government prioritize providing affordable high-speed internet access to all Canadians. Specifically, we are urging that the government continue its efforts in implementing high speed internet to all remote communities. This will allow all Canadians to access information, digital literacy and expression.

41. In order to overcome practices that foster online polarization and patterns of exclusion, we urge a Digital Services Regulator to develop an equity-focused framework for platform design, content moderation and codes of conduct that seeks to reduce systemic harms from being reproduced or amplified online.

42. In light of the under-representation of certain groups and communities in the online space, we are calling on the Digital Services Regulator to direct digital service providers to each create a committee mandated to ensure adequate inclusion and representation of Canadians, by demographic profile.

These committees must include external members of under-represented or historically marginalized communities that bring their lived experience and knowledge to this work.

These committees should ensure and demonstrate, through regular reporting, that content and data, such as linguistic content, perspectives, geography, etc., are integrated and promoted on platforms.

43. The standards with which digital service providers operate, and hold their users to, often do not reflect or consider the diversity of communities involved. Digital service providers in Canada must ensure that their codes of conduct and community guidelines are developed and evolve in collaboration with representatives of the communities in which they operate, with special attention given to the concerns of historically marginalized groups to ensure that cycles of discrimination do not persist.

The Canadian Citizens' Assemblies on Democratic Expression have also demonstrated the usefulness of linking expert-led and citizen-led policy exercises which have worked in parallel to offer government different vantage points.

Minority Reports

Members were encouraged to share all points of view throughout
the Assembly process.

Discussion remained lively, but respectful, throughout the proceedings, and while some minor differences in opinion remained, every member of the Assembly endorsed the recommendations in this final report. However, members also were given the opportunity to write a minority report if they wished to highlight any points of agreement or disagreement, or to include their own commentary.

FROM **MELANIE WATSON:**

In our Capstone Assembly this time with the defined areas of discussion and shorter period of time to meet I feel that there were two areas of importance to me that were hardly mentioned.

Once again, I'd like to highlight that I feel that we did not discuss in any depth or make recommendations around upholding/creating Canadian content online. In my mind this includes promoting and incentivizing journalism online, Canadian music online and telling our own stories in fictional and documentary forms online. The following points are the only times I could see that we the Assembly made note of Canadian content:

- **D23:** Users must have full control over the content they see, including the choice for more Canadian content.

- **G39:** Invest in quality information and verifiable journalism at the national, regional and community levels. News articles should contain identifiers making them easier to track and validate.

The above two points are both good recommendations but I feel this topic is more important than what we have noted. Without our own stories reflected back at us (in all our diversity), we have no idea who we are or where we've come from or where we might want to go. I say this because we live next door to what is probably the biggest content generator of its own news, stories and views, the United States. Historically and currently, Canada has never had the budget and resources to out-compete the media the U.S. puts out. It's why we have the CRTC. Have you ever noticed that you're missing seeing or hearing media that actually reflects the place or culture you live in? Do you think about it? I do.

On another note — Digital Sustainability — I don't think we have mentioned anything in this Assembly about the devices that we use to get online — phones, computers etc and the waste they create, the resources we mine, planned obsolescence. We need to call on the providers of these devices to make them upgradeable and recyclable. We need clean technology. I'm sure scientifically we have the ability but seemingly no will from government to put regulations in place. It seems like this is a prime topic for international collaboration. Perhaps this is something else that DSR could do?

FROM **YVAN GOSSELIN:**

[TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH]: I have read the report — our report — and I am impressed by its value. I am convinced that all this constructive and positive energy of the members of the Assembly will germinate in each of us this universal conscience which unites us all for a better world. Thank you to all RESPONSIBLE members, organizers, and participants. Now the work to be realized belongs to those who write the policies, the laws, the regulations and their applications. It is up to you to be RESPONSIBLE.

FROM **BOB BARCLAY:**

my computer has an off button

well the other day i sat / at my computer to relax
and i saw a spider crawl / over a button near the back
well i blew at that button / and the dust just made me cough
and when i pressed that button / my computer turned off !
my computer has an off button / boy it's gonna be a great day !
my computer has an off button / i'm gonna go out and play
my computer has an off button / and so does my phone
i'm gonna put them down / i'm gonna leave them alone
well i went right outside / and took a ride on my bike
and then i picked some flowers / the yellow ones i like
i thought of what to do next / couldn't think of a thing
so i just sat down / and listened to the birds sing
my computer has an off button / boy this is a great day !
my computer has an off button / i'm gonna go out and play
my computer has an off button / and so does my phone
i'm gonna put them down / i'm gonna leave them alone
then i picked up a stick / and watched it float down a crick

and dad said come quick / we're going on a picnic
then i tripped on a brick / and i gave it a kick
but i didn't get sick / wasn't that a trick ?
well the other day i sat / at my computer to relax
and i saw a spider crawl / over a button near the back
well i blew at that button / and the dust just made me cough
and when i pressed that button / my computer turned off !
my computer has an off button / boy it's gonna be a great day !
my computer has an off button / i'm gonna go out and play
my computer has an off button / and so does my phone
i'm gonna put them down / i'm gonna leave them alone

FROM **FAUZIA BAJWA:**

Big-Tech has evaded meaningful regulation by governments. Self-regulation, on the other hand, has not produced the best outcomes for society and I therefore endorse the recommendation that the government establish a Digital Service Regulator (DSR) which is well funded and well-resourced. However, given the size, power and reach of Big-Tech the threat of regulatory capture should not be ignored. Cory Doctorow (Ref. 1) eloquently documents the successful campaign conducted by big telcos and cable operators in the U.S. to, in his words, 'murder' Net Neutrality, despite the fact that most Americans would have preferred to keep it alive. He attributes their success to (a) monopolistic profits which they deployed to lobby lawmakers (b) the concentration of the industry in a handful of companies who could easily collude to safeguard their interests, (c) the weakness of the regulator and (d) the revolving door between industry and government. The antidote to regulatory capture is strong regulation coupled with antitrust measures. As Mr. Doctorow puts it, 'The problem isn't that regulators are too strong, it's that corporations are too strong.'

It could be argued that the U.S. and Canada are different so we need not worry about regulatory capture this side of the border. Georg Riekeles, a former European Commission official, documents the intense lobbying efforts of Big-Tech in Europe (Ref. 2). According to his account, Big-Tech lobbied lawmakers and funded 'grassroot' movements and think tanks to resist regulation. He argues that they 'won their fight in Brussels over profiling and tracking ads' and that despite the Digital Services Act (DSA), 'the core of big-tech's surveillance-based business model remains intact.' Canada, like Europe and the U.S., is not immune from the danger of regulatory capture.

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1. https://doctorow.medium.com/regulatory-capture-59b2013e2526

2. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/28/i-saw-first-hand-techgiants-seduced-eu-google-meta

Glossary of Terms

A

Algorithm: In computer programming, a set of instructions designed to perform a specific task. Digital platforms and search engines use proprietary algorithms to organize and display content and search results to users, based on input that may include user data and past activity on the platform.

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B

Bots: Bot is a contraction of the word robot. In computing, a bot is a software program that can interact with systems or users, and execute commands or perform routine tasks, such as answer messages or carry out searches, either automatically or with minimal human intervention.

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D

Digital platform: An internet company and/or service on which registered users post information and communicate digitally, including popular social media sites/companies such as Google, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and more.

Digital Service Provider: The term "digital service provider" applies to companies or other organizations which provide or substantially enable online services to users. These can include but are not limited to search engines, digital communications platforms, social media platforms, as well as digital gaming, entertainment, commerce and news sites

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Disinformation: Intentionally false or misleading information shared to make money, have political influence, or maliciously cause trouble, harm, or sow distrust.

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Duty to act responsibly: The obligation to answer for an act done, and to repair any injury it may have caused. This obligation arises without any contract, either on the part of the party bound to repair the injury, or of the party injured.

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E

E-court: An online and accessible tribunal that adjudicates complaints concerning harmful speech as well as other breaches to laws, regulations, and standards that govern digital realms.

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I

Internet (or digital) literacy: The knowledge, skills, and behaviours required to access and use internet services and tools, social media and digital platforms, devices that connect to the internet, and related technology. This includes the ability to appropriately judge the nature and truthfulness of content.

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M

Misinformation: False information that one does not realize is false or misleading, often shared because one is trying to help, is afraid, is trying to protect people, for fun, or as a display of their identity.

Key Players

Canadian Heritage / **Patrimoine canadien**

Canadian Heritage and its portfolio organizations play a vital role in the cultural, civic and economic life of Canadians. Arts, culture and heritage represent more than $57 billion in the Canadian economy and close to 673,000 jobs in sectors such as film and video, broadcasting, music, publishing, archives, performing arts, heritage institutions, festivals and celebrations.

Digital Citizen Initiative is a multi-component strategy through the Department of Heritage that aims to support democracy and social cohesion in Canada by building citizen resilience against online disinformation and building partnerships to support a healthy information ecosystem.

The Digital Citizen Initiative also supports a community of Canadian researchers that promote a healthy information ecosystem to help Canadians and the Government understand online disinformation and its impact on Canadian society, and in turn build an evidence-base to identify potential action and develop future policy-making.

Competition Bureau Canada

Competition Bureau, as an independent law enforcement agency, ensures that Canadian businesses and consumers prosper in a competitive and innovative marketplace. They are a federal institution that is part of the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada portfolio.

Headed by the Commissioner of Competition, the Bureau is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Competition Act, the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act (except as it relates to food), the Textile Labelling Act and the Precious Metals Marking Act.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada provides advice and information to individuals about protecting personal information. They also enforce two federal privacy laws: the Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, that set out the rules for how federal government institutions and certain businesses must handle personal information.

Guest Presenters

Eighteen experts generously gave their time and shared their knowledge with the Citizens' Assembly on Democratic Expression. The Assembly extends its sincerest thanks to each of them.

PA **Prabhat Agarwal** is Head of Unit "Digital Services and Platforms" at the European Commission's DG CONNECT.

He comes from a background of academic and industrial research, covering a broad range of fundamental science and commercial high-tech projects. He joined the European Commission in 2007 and has since then covered a variety of digital innovation and regulatory areas. He holds a PhD in Condensed Matter Physics from the University of Cambridge.

EB **Evan Balgord** is the Executive Director of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network, an investigative journalist and a researcher of hate groups in Canada.

The Canadian Anti-Hate Network, a nonprofit, monitors and investigates hate groups in Canada, providing information to media, researchers, law enforcement and community organizations. It is modeled after, and supported by, the Southern Poverty Law Center in the United States. The Canadian Anti-Hate Network is affiliated with several members of the Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism, Security and Society.

Balgord earned his Honours Bachelor of Science at the University of Toronto with a double major in Psychology and Sociology. Following that, he completed the Munk School of Global Affairs Fellowship in Global Journalism.

BB **Brian Bohunicky**, Vice-President of Policy, comes to PPF after an outstanding policy career within the government of Canada, including positions in Transport, Agriculture, Fisheries and Oceans, Defence, Public Services and Procurement, PCO and the forerunner to ESDC. He has worked on both the public service and political sides, as well as in the private sector.

Brian is a graduate of the University of Manitoba and the University of Oxford, which he attended as a Rhodes Scholar. Brian joined PPF in 2019.

WC **Wendy Hui Kyong Chun** is Simon Fraser University's Canada 150 Research Chair in New Media and leads the Digital Democracies Institute. She is the author of several works including Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics (MIT, 2006), Programmed Visions: Software and Memory (MIT, 2011), Updating to Remain the Same: Habitual New Media (MIT, 2016), Discriminating Data (MIT, 2021), and the co-author of Pattern Discrimination (University of Minnesota & Meson Press, 2019).

She has been Professor and Chair of the Department of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University, where she worked for almost two decades. She has also been a Visiting Scholar at the Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania, Member of the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton), and she has held fellowships from: the Guggenheim, ACLS, American Academy of Berlin, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard.

RC **Rachel Curran** is a lawyer by training, with nearly fifteen years of experience providing strategic and policy advice to the Prime Minister of Canada and federal and provincial Cabinet ministers. She worked as a senior associate with Harper & Associates Ltd., and as an instructor with Carleton University's Riddell Program in Political Management. She also appeared as a regular panelist on CBC's "Power and Politics", commenting on issues of policy and politics. Rachel is currently Public Policy Manager for Meta Canada.

ND **Nathalie Des Rosiers** is the Principal of Massey College, Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Professor of Law at the University of Ottawa – Common Law. From 2016 -2019, she was the MPP representing the riding of Ottawa-Vanier and Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry (2018). Prior to politics, she was Dean of Law, Common Law,University of Ottawa (2013-2016), General Counsel of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (2009-2013), Vice-President, Governance, University of Ottawa (2008-2009), Dean of Law, Civil Law (2004-2008) and President of the Law Commission of Canada(2000-2004).

With Peter Oliver and Patrick Macklem, she co-edited the Oxford Handbook of Canadian Constitutional Law (2017). She has written extensively on civil liberties, human rights and law reform, focusing her work on the right to protest and freedom of expression.

Her early work on limitations of action for sexual violence changed Canadian law in the 1990s. She has also written with Louise Langevin and Marie-Pier Nadeau, L'indemnisation des victimes de violence sexuelle et conjugale (Prix Walter Owen, 2014).

She has received the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario, honorary doctorates from Université UCL (Belgium) and the Law Society of Ontario, le Prix Christine Tourigny (Barreau du Québec), the Law Society Medal from the Law Society of Ontario and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

SD **Supriya Dwivedi** is the Director of Policy & Engagement at the Max Bell School's Centre for Media, Technology and Democracy at McGill University.

Supriya became personally invested in combating misinformation and disinformation through her experience as the host of a morning show on a Toronto talk radio station. Mis and disinformation regularly found its way onto the airwaves, and it directly contributed to the volume and level of vitriolic threats Supriya received. After a particularly vile threat that targeted her daughter, Supriya resigned.

Supriya also has extensive experience in government relations and public affairs, where her work has largely focused on providing strategic counsel to both international and Canadian clients on public affairs campaigns at all levels of government, maintaining and building stakeholder relationships, and assessing the policy implications of legislation within the Canadian regulatory framework.

Supriya has a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) from McGill University, as well as civil law (LL.B.) and common law (J.D.) degrees from Université de Montréal. She is a highly sought-after media commentator, appearing weekly on CBC's Power & Politics and writing regularly for the Toronto Star and the National Observer as a contributing political columnist.

AE **Amira Elghawaby** is an award-winning journalist and human rights advocate.

She works with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation as its Director of Strategic Communications and Campaigns. Prior to that, Amira worked in the labour movement as well as in advocacy, promoting the civil liberties of Canadian Muslims at the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM).

Amira has also been involved with numerous initiatives to counter hate and promote inclusion, including as a founding board member of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network, as a Champion of the United For All United Way-East Ontario initiative, and as a board member with the Silk Road Institute. She is currently serving a second term as a Commissioner on the Public Policy Forum's Canadian Commission on Democratic Engagement.

EL **Emily Laidlaw** is a Canada Research Chair in Cybersecurity Law and Associate Professor at the University of Calgary in the Faculty of Law. She researches in the area of technology regulation and human rights, with a focus on content regulation, platform liability, privacy and freedom of expression. She is the author of the book Regulating Speech in Cyberspace: Gatekeepers, Human Rights and Corporate Responsibility (Cambridge University Press, 2015). As a scholar, she actively contributes to law reform, with recent projects on defamation, non-consensual disclosure of intimate images, the tort of privacy and online abuse, and platform governance.

Ms. Laidlaw has taught a variety of courses over the years in Internet Law, Privacy and Cybersecurity, Media Law, Human Rights, Tort Law, Intellectual Property, and Foundations of Law and Justice. She is also the Ethics Advisor to the Members of Council at the City of Calgary and previously practiced as a litigator. From 2006 to 2014, Ms. Laidlaw obtained her LLM and PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Science and was an Assistant Professor (lecturer) at the University of East Anglia Law School. Ms. Laidlaw is a network director of the Canadian Network on Information Security and a member of the Institute for Security, Privacy and Information Assurance.

CM **Colin McKay** is Head, Public Policy and Government Relations, Google Canada. He is responsible for setting strategy and implementing advocacy campaigns for Google in Canada on issues related to innovation, internet regulation, data protection and trade policy, among many others. He previously worked on privacy, innovation, transportation and immigration policy with the Government of Canada, including at the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada.

He is a past member of the Government Advisory Committee on Open Data and is Vice Chair of the Board of MediaSmarts, the national digital literacy organization. He is also on the Executive Committee of the Board at the Information Technology Association of Canada, and is on the board of the Canadian American Business Council.

BM The **Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, PC, CC, CSTJ, FCIARB** served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada from 1989 to 2000 and as Chief Justice of the Court from 2000 to 2017.

Ms. McLachlin received her post-secondary education at the University of Alberta: B.A. (Hon.) 1965; M.A. 1968; LL.B. 1968. She practiced law in Alberta and British Columbia and taught law at the University of British Columbia, before being named to the bench in British Columbia, where she served as a trial and appellate judge before being named to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Since retiring from the Supreme Court of Canada, Ms. McLachlin has pursued her interest in dispute resolution as an arbitrator and mediator, as a member of the Hong Kong Court of Appeal, the Singapore International Commercial Court, and the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre. She continues to work for access to justice and to write and speak on legal and other matters in Canada and abroad. Ms. McLachlin is a Companion of the Order of Canada and the recipient of numerous awards and honours.

BM **Dr. Brenda McPhail** is the Director of the Privacy, Technology and Surveillance Program at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. As a researcher at a national, non-profit legal advocacy organization, her work supports litigation, advocacy and public education relating to the ways in which privacy rights are at risk in contemporary society. She has appeared as an expert witness before Parliamentary and Senate committees regarding privacy law reform, national security, and biometric data, and leads CCLA's litigation in key court cases that raise privacy issues. Recent grant-funded research includes work on data trusts as a governance framework for data with public good characteristics, workplace surveillance applications, media governance and AI, facial recognition technology in policing, and virtual health care data privacy.

LM **Laura McPhie** (she/her/kwe) is a member of Pikwakanagan First Nation and of mixed Indigenous and colonial descent. She speaks from lived experience of being a Two-Spirit/Queer urban Indigenous person who is a trauma survivor and neuro-divergent. Currently, she uses her lived experience to design interactive trainings, education frameworks, and DEI policy advice for organizations. Laura believes strongly that we are each on a learning path and our roles are to help those on the path around us.

DM **David Morin** is a full professor at the School of Applied Politics of the Université de Sherbrooke. His areas of expertise and professional experience focus on national and international security issues. Since 2017, he has been a co-holder of the UNESCO Chair in the Prevention of Violent Radicalization and Extremism (UNESCO-PREV Chair) and in 2015 co-founded the Observatory on Radicalization and Violent Extremism (OSR). He is also a manager of the PREV-IMPACT Canada program on the evaluation of violent extremism prevention programs, funded by Public Safety Canada's Community Resilience Fund. Mr. Morin is an active contributor to the debate and dialogue on these issues in the Canadian context and leads numerous scientific and public activities.

He is currently Co-President of the Dialogue+ project, which aims to prevent discrimination and radicalization in Canada, and was one of the initiators of the Youth Forum – Thinking Democracy Differently, a Quebec program aimed at combatting and defusing extremist

discourse leading to violence. He sits as a designated expert on the steering committee of the Francophone Network for the Prevention of Violent Radicalization and Extremism that could lead to Terrorism (FrancoPREV) of the International Organization of La Francophonie and was a member of the scientific committee for the UNESCO Internet and the Radicalization of Youth conference in 2016.

Mr. Morin also has a rich and diverse experience in coordinating international projects with researchers and practitioners and in capacity building in Francophone Africa. He has just co-edited the book Le nouvel âge des extrêmes? Les démocraties occidentales, la radicalisation et l'extrémisme violent, published in 2021 by the Presses de l'Université de Montréal. He has also co-authored a number of recent reports on the evaluation of violent extremism prevention, on prevention mechanisms in the Francophone space, and on conspiracy and misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

TO **Taylor Owen** is the Beaverbrook Chair in Media, Ethics and Communications, the founding director of The Center for Media, Technology and Democracy, and an Associate Professor in the Max Bell School of Public Policy at McGill University. He is the host of the Big Tech podcast, a Senior Fellow at the Center for International Governance Innovation, a Fellow at the Public Policy Forum, and sits on the Governing Council of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). He was previously an Assistant Professor of Digital Media and Global Affairs at the University of British Columbia and the Research Director of Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia School of Journalism. His Doctorate is from the University of Oxford and he has been a Trudeau and Banting scholar, an Action Canada Fellow and received the 2016 Public Policy Forum Emerging Leader award. He is the author of *Disruptive Power: The Crisis of the State in the Digital* Age (Oxford University Press, 2015) and the co-editor of *The World Won't Wait: Why Canada Needs to Rethink its Foreign Policie*s (University of Toronto Press, 2015) and Journalism After Snowden: The Future of the Free Press in the Surveillance State (Columbia University Press, 2016). His forthcoming book with Emily Bell will be published by Yale University Press in 2021. His work focuses on the intersection of media, technology and public policy and can be found at www.taylorowen.com and @taylor_owen.

DP **Danielle Paradis** is an Indigenous (Métis) magazine writer, journalist, editor, educator, and podcaster who lives in Treaty 6 (Edmonton, Alberta). She has written for both local and international audiences. You can read (or hear) her work at Canadaland, Chatelaine, Toronto Star (Edmonton), Gig City, BUSTLE, Canadian True Crime Podcast, and The Sprawl. Danielle covers politics, arts and culture, and Indigenous Issues. Danielle loves a good FOIP story and studied investigative journalism, story-based inquiry method, at the Centre for Investigative Journalism out of the UK.

She teaches journalism, focusing on advanced reporting and reporting on diverse communities at MacEwan University and Humber College. She also works for a non-profit, Indigenous Friends Association, that focuses on connecting traditional knowledge and digital technology for Indigenous youth. She also has a background as a literary editor for Other Voices, and in-depth media experience on both television and radio.

MS **Michel Sabbagh** is the Director General, Broadcasting, Copyright, and Creative Marketplace Branch at Canadian Heritage (PCH). Prior to joining PCH in 2015, he held a number of positions at Industry Canada and the Competition Bureau. Michel has a wealth of experience and expertise in areas such as international trade and copyright. Some of his key accomplishments include: leading Canada's Creative Export Strategy; securing the cultural exemption in two major trade agreements: the Canada-US-Mexico Agreement and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Transpacific Partnership; and more recently in the context of COVID-19, taking a leadership role across PCH to design and implement a large-scale recipient survey for the Emergency Support Fund for Culture, Heritage and Sport. Michel holds a Masters of Science in Administration, specialized in Applied Economics, from HEC Montréal.

DS **Dylan Sparks** As Policy Advisor at Reset, UK,, Dylan conducts research and strategic planning to support our programmatic work on law and policy around the world. He works to expand Reset's network of relationships by evaluating projects and scoping funding opportunities in support of cutting-edge research, technology development, civic engagement, and policy advocacy. Dylan's role at Reset builds on his previous work as a researcher for Luminate and Omidyar Network where his remit focused on developing understandings about digital threats to democracy and studying elections, disinformation, and data privacy legislation. In this capacity, he also worked on due diligence for grants and investments.

HT **Dr. Heidi Tworek** is associate professor of international history and public policy at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. She is an award-winning researcher of media, history, health communications, international organizations, and platform governance. She is a member of the Science and Technology Studies program, the Language Science Initiative, and the Institute for European Studies at UBC. She is a senior fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation as well as a non-resident fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States and the Canadian Global Affairs Institute. She co-edits Journal of Global History. She is a member of the Government of Canada's expert advisory group on online safety.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION + EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP

The Commission on Democratic Expression

The Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression was constituted to better understand, anticipate, and respond to the effects of new digital technologies on public life and Canadian democracy. The Commission convened in 2020-21 and 2021-22. In their first year they discussed how to reduce hate and harmful content online and outlined a six-step approach to protect democratic expression online.

In the second year, the Commission deliberated on the central question: *"How can governments and the public incentivize greater transparency and accountability measures to minimize the potential harms of online platforms including mis- and disinformation, online hate, and abuses of privacy?"* To this end,the Commission explored a range of policies being debated around the world to make online systems more transparent to users and researchers and accountable to the public interest.

The Commission's 2020 and 2021 reports can be accessed by visiting the Public Policy Forum website at **ppforum.ca**.

The eminent Canadians who served as Commissioners brought a range of perspectives and skills and have extensive experience in the areas of law, media, technology, citizen participation, and politics.

2020 Commissioners:

20 RICK **ANDERSON**
Principal, Earnscliffe Strategy

Rick Anderson is a Canadian political strategist, public affairs commentator and businessman. Highly active in politics and public affairs commentary throughout his life, Rick has served in senior advisory positions to prime ministers, party leaders and leadership candidates.

20 JULIE **CARON-MALENFANT**
Director General, Institut du Nouveau Monde

Julie joined the INM – an independent and non-partisan organization that works to strengthen democratic institutions through citizen participation - in 2009, and has taken on the role of general management since 2017. She is regularly consulted on issues related to citizen participation in the public decision-making process and democratic life.

20 ADAM **DODEK**
Dean, Faculty of Law (Common Law Section), University of Ottawa

Adam Dodek is Dean and Full Professor at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law – Common Law Section. He is a public law scholar and previously worked in the private sector and in government, as a Policy Advisor and then as Chief of Staff to the Attorney General of Ontario.

20 AMIRA **ELGHAWABY**
Journalist and Human Rights Advocate

Prior to joining Canada's labour movement where she currently works, Amira spent five years promoting the civil liberties of Canadian Muslims at the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) between 2012 to the fall of 2017. Amira is a founding board member of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network.

20 JAMEEL **JAFFER**
Executive Director, Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University

Jameel Jaffer is the Executive Director of the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, which defends the freedoms of speech and the press through litigation, research, and public education. He grew up in Kingston and Toronto.

20 JEAN **LA ROSE**
Former Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network

Jean La Rose was the Chief Executive Officer of APTN from November 2002 until December 2019 after having served as Communication Director to three AFN National Chiefs from 1994 to 2002.

20 THE RIGHT HONOURABLE **BEVERLEY MCLACHLIN**
PC, CC, CSTJ, FCIARB

The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin served as Chief Justice of Canada from 2000 to mid-December 2017. In the summer of 2018, Ms. McLachlin became a Member Arbitrator at Arbitration Place.

2021 Commissioners:

RICK **ANDERSON**
Principal, Earnscliffe Strategy Group

Rick Anderson brings decades of senior-level experience in business and government to Earnscliffe, with a focus on providing strategic advice and counsel on corporate strategy and public issues management.

Rick works with senior executives in the world's largest and most successful organizations, as well as assisting early-stage and high-growth entrepreneurs. He has deep experience working with C-Suite leaders, and familiarity with public policy, governance, political and regulatory affairs, mergers and acquisitions, and communications and marketing.

Prior to joining Earnscliffe, Rick spent 15 years in Canada, the US, and the UK with a foremost strategic communications firm and ran his own professional consulting practice. He currently divides his time between Vancouver and Ottawa, working out of Earnscliffe's offices in both cities.

Highly active in politics and public affairs commentary throughout his life, Rick has served in senior advisory positions to prime ministers, party leaders and leadership candidates.

He is a frequent political affairs commentator on Canada's leading news organizations.

WENDY HUI KYONG **CHUN**
Canada 150 Research Chair in New Media, Simon Fraser University

Wendy Hui Kyong Chun is Simon Fraser University's Canada 150 Research Chair in New Media and leads the Digital Democracies Institute. She is the author of several works including Discriminating Data, plus three other books from MIT: Updating to Remain the Same: Habitual New Media (2016), Programmed Visions: Software and Memory (2011), and Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics (2006). She has been Professor and Chair of the Department of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University, where she worked for almost two decades.

She has held numerous visiting chairs and fellowships from institutions such as Harvard, the Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania, the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton), the Guggenheim, ACLS, and American Academy of Berlin.

NATHALIE **DES ROSIERS**
Principal, Massey College, Full Professor, Faculty of Law (Common Law) University of Ottawa, Distinguished Visitor, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto

Nathalie Des Rosiers is the Principal of Massey College. From 2016 to 2019, she was an MPP representing the riding of Ottawa-Vanier. She was Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry from January to June 2018. Prior to politics, she was the Dean of Law, Common Law, University of Ottawa (2013-2016), General Counsel of the Canadian Civil

Liberties Association (2009-2013), Vice-President, Governance, University of Ottawa (2008-2009), Dean of Law, Civil Law (2004-2008), and President of the LAW Commission of Canada (2000-2004).

With Peter Oliver and Patrick Macklem, she co-edited The Oxford Handbook of the Canadian Constitution (2017). She also wrote with Louise Langevin and Marie-Pier Nadeau, L'indemnisation des victimes de violence sexuelle et conjugale (Prix Walter Owen, 2014). She has received the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario, honorary doctorates from Université UCL (Belgium) and the Law Society of Ontario, le Prix Christine Tourigny (Barreau du Québec), and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

21 AMIRA **ELGHAWABY**
Director of Programming and Outreach, Canadian Race Relations Foundation

Amira Elghawaby is a journalist and human rights advocate. She currently serves as the Director of Programming and Outreach at the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

Previously, Amira worked in Canada's labour movement and additionally spent five years promoting the civil liberties of Canadian Muslims at the National Council of Canadian Muslims between 2012 and 2017. She has supported several national initiatives to counter hate and to promote inclusion, including as founding board member of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network and past board member at the Silk Road Institute. Amira obtained an honours degree in Journalism and Law from Carleton University in 2001.

21 MERELDA **FIDDLER-POTTER**
Vanier Scholar, PhD Candidate, and Executive in Residence, Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy

Merelda is currently a PhD candidate at the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy in Regina. Awarded a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship in 2019, her research explores the media's role in helping Canadians learn the truth of our colonial policies, the impact it has on Indigenous people, and how the media can keep Indigenous issues high on the public agenda.

Merelda is also a former journalist and documentary filmmaker, who spent 16 years working for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation [CBC] in radio, television, and online. She also launched her own documentary film company, making numerous films for national Canadian broadcasters. Merelda has a Masters of Arts in Canadian Plains Studies and a Bachelor's in Journalism and Communications, both from the University of Regina.

In addition to her doctoral studies, Merelda is a sessional lecturer at First Nations University of Canada, where she teaches Indigenous Studies, Indigenous Communication Arts, Indigenous Business, and the Reconciliation Certificate. She was also the Dallas W. Smythe Chair at the University of Regina School of Journalism from 2017-2018.

As a Métis woman committed to creating space in all institutions for Indigenous peoples, Merelda consults with organizations looking to learn about Indigenous Reconciliation and how to employ it effectively in the workplace.

21 PHILIP **HOWARD**

Director, Programme on Democracy and Technology and Professor of Internet Studies, Balliol College, University of Oxford

As Director of Oxford University's Programme on Democracy and Technology, Phil Howard oversees a large research team working on the use of new information technologies in politics, with the aim of raising civic engagement and improving public life around the world. In addition to his position as Director, Howard is a Professor and Fellow of Balliol College.

Howard, a scholar of political communication and an authority on global media, has long been immersed in the study of elections, conflict, and international affairs. He has done field work in 16 countries — democracies and authoritarian regimes — and even worked as an election observer.

Ground-breaking investigations by Howard and his team have changed the global conversation about the role of social media in public life. Since 2014, Howard has led the study of misinformation around the world, through public writing and lectures, and has advised world governments, the technology industry, and key civil society groups on the best responses to election interference, fake news, and misinformation.

As an academic, Howard has taught courses on political communication, globalization, comparative media systems, international relations, and social science research methods. He has published ten books and edited volumes and authored over 130 scholarly articles, book chapters, and working papers. He has won best book prizes from multiple professional organizations across the social sciences.

He was recently named a "Global Thinker" by Foreign Policy, and the National Democratic Institute gave him their "Democracy Prize" for pioneering the social science of fake news.

21 VIVEK **KRISHNAMURTHY**

Samuelson-Glushko Professor of Law, University of Ottawa

Vivek Krishnamurthy is the Samuelson-Glushko Professor of Law at the University of Ottawa and Director of CIPPIC — the Samuelson-Glushko Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic.

Vivek's teaching, scholarship, and clinical legal practice focus on the complex regulatory and human rights-related challenges that arise in cyberspace. He advises governments, activists, and companies on the human rights impacts of new technologies and is a frequent public commentator on emerging technology and public policy issues.

Vivek was previously the Assistant Director of Harvard Law School's Cyberlaw Clinic and Counsel in the Corporate Social Responsibility Practice at Foley Hoag LLP. He is a Rhodes Scholar and clerked for the Hon. Morris J. Fish of the Supreme Court of Canada upon his graduation from Yale Law School. Vivek is currently a Fellow of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, a Faculty Associate of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University, and a Senior Associate of he Human Rights Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
BEVERLEY MCLACHLIN
PC, CC, CSTJ, FCIARB

Beverley McLachlin served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada from 1989 to 2000 and as Chief Justice of the Court from 2000 to 2017.

Ms. McLachlin received her post-secondary education at the University of Alberta: B.A. (Hon.) 1965; M.A. 1968; LL.B. 1968. She practiced law in Alberta and British Columbia and taught law at the University of British Columbia, before being named to the bench in British Columbia, where she served as a trial and appellate judge before being named to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Since retiring from the Supreme Court of Canada, Ms. McLachlin has pursued her interest in dispute resolution as an arbitrator and mediator, as a member of the Hong Kong Court of Appeal, the Singapore International Commercial Court, and the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre. She continues to work for access to justice and to write and speak on legal and other matters in Canada and abroad.

Ms. McLachlin is a Companion of the Order of Canada and the recipient of numerous awards and honours.

TAYLOR **OWEN**
Beaverbrook Chair in Media, Ethics and Communications and Associate Professor, Max Bell School of Public Policy, McGill University

Taylor Owen is the Beaverbrook Chair in Media, Ethics and Communications, the founding director of The Center for Media, Technology and Democracy, and an Associate Professor in the Max Bell School of Public Policy at McGill University. He is the host of the Big Tech podcast, a Senior Fellow at the Center for International Governance Innovation, a Fellow at the Public Policy Forum, and sits on the Governing Council of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

He was previously an Assistant Professor of Digital Media and Global Affairs at the University of British Columbia and the Research Director of the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia School of Journalism. His Doctorate is from the University of Oxford and he has been a Trudeau and Banting scholar, an Action Canada Fellow, and received the 2016 Public Policy Forum Emerging Leader award.

He is the author of *Disruptive Power: The Crisis of the State in the Digital Age* (Oxford University Press, 2015) and the co-editor of *The World Won't Wait: Why Canada Needs to Rethink its Foreign Policies* (University of Toronto Press, 2015) and *Journalism After Snowden: The Future of the Free Press in the Surveillance State* (Columbia University Press, 2016). His forthcoming book with Emily Bell will be published by Yale University Press in 2021. His work focuses on the intersection of media, technology and public policy and can be found at www.taylorowen.com and @taylor_owen.

The Expert Advisory Group

This expert advisory group was given a mandate to provide the Minister of Canadian Heritage with advice on how best to design the legislative and regulatory framework to address harmful content online, and how to best incorporate the feedback received during the national consultation the government held last year.

More specifically, the expert advisory group participated in nine workshops on the components of a legislative and regulatory framework for online safety addressing the following core components of the framework:

- Setting out which online services should be regulated, and to what extent

- Establishing how "harmful content" would be defined and regulated

- Identifying a set of obligations and requirements for regulated entities to monitor, moderate and manage harmful content on their services

- Setting an enforcement toolkit to help promote and ensure compliance

- Laying out reasonable linkages to authorities

- Identifying programming and policy responses that could be included in the framework to confront disinformation and build civic and media literacy and resilience

- Ensuring the inclusion of elements that protect freedom of expression and privacy rights

The group was composed of 12 experts and specialists from across Canada who provided expert knowledge in a variety of fields. They come from diverse backgrounds with experience on issues relating to platform governance and content regulation, civil liberties, tech regulation, and national security. The group was led by two co-chairs, **Pierre Trudel** and **Emily Laidlaw**, who helped facilitate discussion, and communication throughout the consultation.

AA

Amarnath Amarasingam:
Assistant Professor, School of Religion, Queen's University

Amarnath Amarasingam is an Assistant Professor in the School of Religion and is cross-appointed to the Department of Political Studies at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. He is also a Senior Fellow with the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation.

His research is focused on terrorism and political violence; sociology of religion; religion and violence; social movements; religion and politics in the Middle East; religion and the public sphere; diaspora politics and activism; religion and media/social media; atheism and non-religion; hate movements and the far-right.

Mr. Amarasingam is the author of Pain, Pride, and Politics: Sri Lankan Tamil Activism in Canada (2015), and the co-editor of Sri Lanka: The Struggle for Peace in the Aftermath of War (2016). He has also published over 40 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, has presented papers at over 100 national and international conferences, and has written for The New York Times, The Monkey Case, The Washington Post, CNN, Politico, The Atlantic, and Foreign Affairs. He has been interviewed on CNN, PBS Newshour, CBC, BBC, and a variety of other media outlets.

BF

Bernie Farber:
Chair, Anti-Hate Network

Bernie Farber is the Chair of the Anti-hate Network. He is acknowledged as one of Canada's most accomplished NGO CEOs. His career spans more than 30 years focused on human rights, diversity, anti-racism, and extremism. His efforts have been documented in numerous Canadian Human Rights publications, books, newspapers and magazines. His work has also been cited for its expertise in a number of academic publications.

Mr. Farber has successfully run large NGOs and Foundations such as the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Paloma Foundation, and retired as the Executive Director of the Mosaic Institute.

Mr. Farber is a human rights consultant, newspaper columnist and social justice advocate. He has received numerous awards for his civil rights work, including the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal, Government of Canada 125 Commemorative medal, the Chancellor's Commendation of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police Award for Outstanding Service and Dedication to Policing in the province of Ontario, among others.

CP

Chanae Parsons:
Specialist, Community Activist and Youth Engagement

Chanae Parsons comes from the historical Black Heritage community of Lucasville and is a loving mother to her son Cairo. She is a strong professional with a Bachelor of Social Work degree from Dalhousie University and pursuing a Master of Education focused in Adult Education, Women's Leadership and Community Development from St. Francis Xavier University. In her official role as the Manager of Programming and Community Engagement for the Eastern District of the Halifax Public Libraries, the largest public library system in the Province, Chanae oversees the development and implementation of programming and community engagement strategy for one of four regions of the Halifax municipality, as well as Youth Services across all branches.

Ms. Parsons participates on several Nova Scotian leadership committees, such as the African Nova Scotian Sexual Violence Advisory Committee, formed by the Department of Community Services to create the e-learning module: African Nova Scotian Perspectives on Sexual Violence, and the African Nova Scotian Employment Innovation Lab, also formed by the Department of Community Services to find innovative solutions to help lower the unemployment rates amongst Black youth in Nova Scotia. She also sits on the Board of Directors for Black Girls Gather and GameChangers902. Additionally, she is co-founder of the community-based organization ACCE HFX (Arts, Community, Culture, and Economics), where she provides support, resources, and learning opportunities to a wide range of African Nova Scotians in vulnerable positions.

Ms. Parsons is both passionate and experienced in youth leadership, program creation and facilitation, research, project management, policy reform, critical thinking, public speaking, as well as diversity and inclusion. She prioritizes youth-led initiatives and is committed to ensuring that youth, specifically Black youth, see themselves reflected in leadership roles.

DM

David Morin:
Professor, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Université De Sherbrooke

David Morin is a full professor at the School of Applied Politics of the Université de Sherbrooke. His areas of expertise and professional experience focus on national and international security issues. Since 2017, he has been a co-holder of the UNESCO Chair in the Prevention of Violent Radicalization and Extremism (UNESCO-PREV Chair) and in 2015 co-founded the Observatory on Radicalization and Violent Extremism (OSR). He is also a manager of the PREV-IMPACT Canada program on the evaluation of violent extremism prevention programs, funded by Public Safety Canada's Community Resilience Fund. Mr. Morin is an active contributor to the debate and dialogue on these issues in the Canadian context and leads numerous scientific and public activities.

He is currently Co-President of the Dialogue+ project, which aims to prevent discrimination and radicalization in Canada, and was one of the initiators of the Youth Forum – Thinking Democracy Differently, a Quebec program aimed at combatting and defusing extremist discourse leading to violence. He sits as a designated expert on the steering committee of the Francophone Network for the Prevention of Violent Radicalization and Extremism that could lead to Terrorism (FrancoPREV) of the International Organization of La Francophonie and was a member of the scientific committee for the UNESCO Internet and the Radicalization of Youth conference in 2016.

Mr. Morin also has a rich and diverse experience in coordinating international projects with researchers and practitioners and in capacity building in Francophone Africa. He has just co-edited the book Le nouvel âge des extrêmes? Les démocraties occidentales, la radicalisation et l'extrémisme violent, published in 2021 by the Presses de l'Université de Montréal. He has also co-authored a number of recent reports on the evaluation of violent extremism prevention, on prevention mechanisms in the Francophone space, and on conspiracy and misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

EL Emily Laidlaw:
Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, University Of Calgary

Emily Laidlaw is a Canada Research Chair in Cybersecurity Law and Associate Professor at the University of Calgary in the Faculty of Law. She researches in the area of technology regulation and human rights, with a focus on content regulation, platform liability, privacy and freedom of expression. She is the author of the book Regulating Speech in Cyberspace: Gatekeepers, Human Rights and Corporate Responsibility (Cambridge University Press, 2015). As a scholar, she actively contributes to law reform, with recent projects on defamation, non-consensual disclosure of intimate images, the tort of privacy and online abuse, and platform governance.

Ms. Laidlaw has taught a variety of courses over the years in Internet Law, Privacy and Cybersecurity, Media Law, Human Rights, Tort Law, Intellectual Property, and Foundations of Law and Justice. She is also the Ethics Advisor to the Members of Council at the City of Calgary and previously practiced as a litigator. From 2006 to 2014, Ms. Laidlaw obtained her LLM and PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Science and was an Assistant Professor (lecturer) at the University of East Anglia Law School.

Ms. Laidlaw is a network director of the Canadian Network on Information Security and a member of the Institute for Security, Privacy and Information Assurance.

GH

Ghayda Hassan:
Professor, Université du Québec à Montréal

Ghayda Hassan, a clinical psychologist and professor of clinical psychology at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), is the founder and director of the Canada Practitioners Network for the Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence (CPN-PREV). She is also a researcher with the Research and Action on Social Polarization (RAPS) team of the SHERPA University Institute at the Integrated Health and Social Services University Network for West-Central Montreal. She also acts as a policy consultant on violence intervention (radicalization, domestic violence and war) and is a member of the RCMP Interim Management Advisory Board.

She contributes her expertise to several national and international partnerships in research, clinical practice and community intervention. Her systematic reviews, research and clinical activities focus on four main areas: social suffering, relationships between communities, and violent extremism; intervention in the context of armed conflict and domestic violence; identity, belonging and mental health of children and adolescents who are members of ethnic or religious minority groups; and intervention and cultural sensitivity training of various professionals working with vulnerable immigrants and refugees.

HT

Heidi Tworek:
Associate Professor, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs and History, University of British Columbia

Heidi Tworek is a Canada Research Chair and Associate Professor of international history and public policy at the University of British Columbia. She is an award-winning researcher of media, history, health communications, international organizations and platform governance. She is also a senior fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation. She is also a non-resident fellow at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute and the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

Ms. Tworek received her BA (Hons) in Modern and Medieval Languages from Cambridge University and earned her PhD in History from Harvard University.

Ms. Tworek has advised officials and policymakers from multiple European and North American governments on media, democracy and the digital economy. She previously held the position of Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies and lecturer in History at Harvard University.

LM

Lianna McDonald:
Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Child Protection

Lianna McDonald is the executive director of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. Since 1998, she has guided the agency from its grass roots origins to a leading organization on the international stage in the fight against child victimization.

Ms. McDonald spearheaded the creation of Project Arachnid, the world's leading technology for disrupting the online distribution of child sexual abuse material globally. To date, more than six million images targeted by Project Arachnid have been removed from the internet. She works closely with international partners, including survivor organizations, child protection NGOs and law enforcement agencies. Her expertise in this space is frequently called upon by key groups including the Five Country Ministerial's child exploitation task force, the United Kingdom's Home Office as well as European Union officials.

In Canada, Ms. McDonald oversaw the establishment of Cybertip.ca, which later became the national tipline under the Government of Canada's National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet. Her advocacy efforts with provincial and federal governments have contributed to multiple legislative changes for the protection of children, including the creation of the criminal code offenses related to online child luring and legislation for the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse material by internet service providers. Ms. McDonald is the recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal (2002) and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012) for her continued dedication to the safety of children.

PT

Pierre Trudel:
Professor, Faculty of Law, Université de Montréal

Pierre Trudel is a full professor at the Centre de recherche en droit public of the Université de Montréal's Faculty of Law. He is a member of the Royal Society of Canada. He teaches civil law, intellectual property law, information law and cyberspace law.

From 1990 to 1995, he was director of the Université de Montréal's Centre de recherche en droit public. From 2003 to 2015, he was the holder of the L.R. Wilson Chair in Information Technology and E-Commerce Law.

Mr. Trudel was a member of the Expert Group for the review of Canada's communications laws from 2018 to 2020. He is the author or co-author of several books, including Droit du cyberespace (1997), Introduction à la loi sur le cadre juridique des technologies de l'information (2012) and Les fausses nouvelles nouveaux visages, nouveaux défis (2018).

Mr. Trudel is currently working on research projects on fundamental information rights, privacy protection in public service networks, assessment of legal issues and risks, the Internet of Things, e-health, audiovisual law, e-commerce and methodologies for developing rules of conduct in Internet environments.

SD

Signa A. Daum Shanks:
Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa

Signa A. Daum Shanks is a trained lawyer, law professor, and historian. Most recently, she was an Associate Professor at York University's Osgoode Hall Law School. Her teaching has included classes such as Torts, Law and economics, Aboriginal Self-government, Canadian legal History, the Kawashimhon Aboriginal Rights Moot, Game Theory and the Law, Indigenous Peoples and Canadian Law, and Comparative Indigenous Legal Traditions and Indigenous Peoples. He previously taught at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Law, the summer program hosted at the Indigenous Law Centre in Saskatoon and the Nunavut Law Program in Iqaluit.

Ms. Daum Shanks has also worked for Justice Canada, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, and Saskatchewan Justice, as well as the Toronto office of a national law firm and the criminal appeals division of the Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario.

Her current research interest revolves around law and economics, Indigenous Governance, and legal history. She has received recognition and funding for her impactful research and professional accomplishments.

TO

Taylor Owen:
Beaverbrook Chair, Media, Ethics and Communications

Taylor Owen is the Beaverbrook Chair in Media, Ethics and Communications, the founding Director of the Center Media, Technology and Democracy, and an Associate Professor in the Max Bell School of Public Policy at McGill University. Mr. Owen is also a senior fellow at the Center for International Governance Innovation (CIGI).

He is the Co-Chair of the Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression with former Supreme Court Justice Beverley McLaughlin. He was previously an Assistant Professor of Digital Media and Global Affairs at the University of British Columbia and the Research Director of Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia School of Journalism.

Mr. Owen has a doctorate from the University of Oxford and his work focuses on the intersection of digital media, technology, and public policy. His main research projects at the moment include work developing and studying domestic and international platform governance policies,

a large-scale digital ecosystem monitoring project called the Media Ecosystem Observatory, work on understanding the impact of digital technologies on childhood development, and comparative analysis of government journalism support policies around the world.

He has been a Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Scholar, a Banting Postdoctoral Fellow, an Action Canada and Public Policy Forum Fellow, the 2016 Public Policy Forum Emerging Leader and, until 2019, served on CIGI's Board of Directors and the Governing Council of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

VK Vivek Krishnamurthy:
Samuelson-Glushko Professor of Law, University of Ottawa

Vivek Krishnamurthy is the Samuelson-Glushko Professor of Law at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Samuelson-Glushko Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC).

Mr. Krishnamurthy's teaching, scholarship, and clinical legal practice focus on the complex regulatory and human rights-related challenges that arise in cyberspace. He advises governments, activists, and companies on the human rights impacts of new technologies and is a frequent public commentator on emerging technology and public policy issues.

Mr. Krishnamurthy is currently a Fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, a Faculty Associate of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University, and a Senior Associate of the Human Rights Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

PROJECT ORGANIZERS

Public Policy Forum:
Project Lead

The Ottawa-based Public Policy Forum is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization and a registered charity. PPF builds bridges among diverse participants in the policy-making process and gives them a platform to examine issues, offer new perspectives, and feed fresh ideas into policy discussions. They believe good policy makes a better Canada.

MASS LBP:
Project Partner

MASS LBP is Canada's recognized leader in the design of deliberative processes that bridge the distance between citizens, stakeholders, and government. For more than a decade, MASS has been designing and executing innovative deliberative processes that help governments develop more effective policies by working together with their partners and communities.

Max Bell School of Public Policy, McGill University:
Project Partner

McGill University's Max Bell School of Public Policy is committed to the research, teaching, public outreach, and practical advocacy of sound public policy. The Max Bell School tackles the complexities of the policy-making process from different perspectives to prepare the next generation of policy leaders for Canada and the world.

PROJECT FUNDERS

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Government of Canada: Department of Canadian Heritage

The Department of Canadian Heritage and its Portfolio organizations play a vital role in the cultural, civic, and economic life of Canadians. Their policies and programs promote an environment where Canadians can experience dynamic cultural expressions, celebrate our history and heritage, and build strong communities. The Department invests in the future by supporting the arts, our official and Indigenous languages, and our athletes and the sport system.

The McConnell Foundation

The McConnell Foundation is a private Canadian foundation that develops and applies innovative approaches to social, cultural, economic, and environmental challenges. They do so through granting and investing, capacity building, convening, and enabling co-creation with grantees, partners, and the public.

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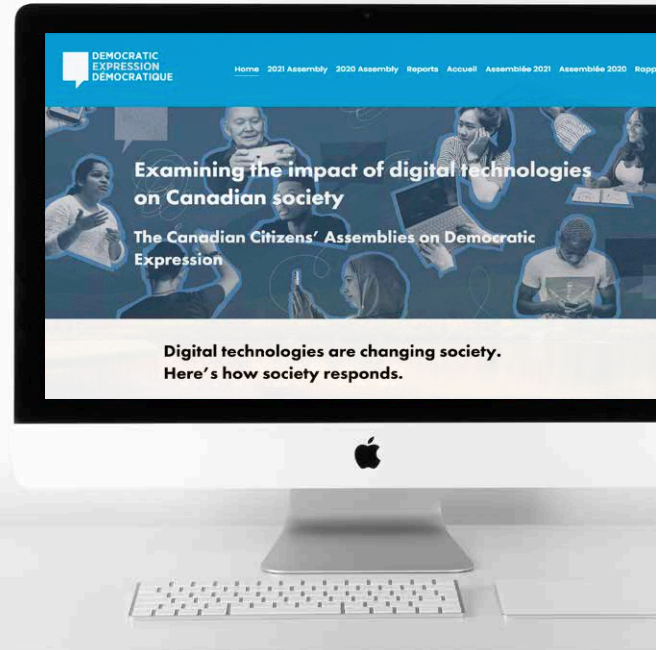
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