



# SPEAKERS



## Dr. Donna Odegaard

Dr. Donna Odegaard AM, Larrakia Elder from Darwin, NT is a business woman with over 40 years experience with a Masters law degree on Aboriginal Land Rights and PhD on Treaty.

As owner and founder of Australia's largest privately owned media network, First Nations Broadcasting Australia, it has four television channels, five radio stations and production company reaching 2,400 Indigenous communities across Australia in over 30 Indigenous languages.

With over 30 years' experience in Indigenous heritage, education, native title, land rights, community development and business. Dr. Odegaard ministerial appointments include Co-Chair Co-Design Voice to Government, senior Indigenous leader on the Ministerial Forum, Indigenous Reference Group for Developing Northern Australia, Director of the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation. Other appointments include Co-Chair ANZLF Indigenous Business Sector Group, ANZLF Indigenous Business Women's Network, Director of the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence, Director, Yamanah Investments Pty Ltd and member of the Indigenous Advisory Committee, Department Agriculture, Water and Heritage.

Accomplishments include: Order of Australia in 2016 for significant service to Indigenous cultural heritage, broadcast media, education and training, and Reconciliation.

Dr. Odegaard was awarded the prestigious Sir John Storey Lifetime Leadership Award for significant leadership in Indigenous affairs and business, Indigenous Alumni Award University of Newcastle; 2005/6 Naming Lady and Commissioning Lady HMAS Larrakia, Royal Australian Navy.

Dr. Odegaard is a national and international speaker on Indigenous Business and Entrepreneurship, Indigenous Affairs, Policy Reform, Indigenous Women and Girls in Business and Leadership, First Nations Tourism and advocate for developing stronger relationships with global First Nations peoples.



# SPEAKERS

## Linda Hartford

As National Director of Indigenous Trust, CIBC Indigenous Markets, Linda Hartford drives CIBC Indigenous wealth strategy particularly trust development, oversight and relationship management. She engages communities and develops relationships to effectively support the successful acquisition, management and utilization of wealth for reconciliation, healing and general betterment of Indigenous communities.

Linda advises on trust structuring and development, crafting effective communication strategies, governance and policies for disbursements as well as advising on best practices and appropriate legal and foundational framework.

Linda also oversees the delivery of transparent and culturally appropriate communication, reporting and education, including financial literacy in Indigenous communities.

Linda is a subject matter expert on Indigenous Trusts and speaks regularly at NATOA and other events, conferences. Linda is passionate and committed to the reconciliation of Canada's Indigenous People. Linda's spouse is Saskatchewan Metis.

## Lynn-Marie Angus

Lynn-Marie Angus is the co-founder of [Sisters Sage](#), an Indigenous wellness brand, creating modern traditional wellness products. Lynn-Marie is from the Gitxaala, Nisga'a, Cree and Metis Nations and currently lives and works on the unceded Qayqayt Nation territories in New Westminster, BC.

Lynn-Marie struggled in trade work; facing barriers as an Indigenous woman to advancement and success, she decided to leave the industry she found toxic. Lynn-Marie enrolled in school to learn about becoming an entrepreneur. She graduated from UBC's Aboriginal Business Management program from Sauder School of business and the Project Management Program at BCIT in 2019.



# SPEAKERS



## Michele Young-Crook

Michele Young-Crook is a pillar in capacity building for Indigenous Communities and an innovative advocate for women and youth. She is currently the CEO and President of the National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association (NATOA), a charity organization mandated to facilitate financial literacy and wellness resources amongst Canada's Indigenous communities in order for them to build and manage self-sustainable Trusts. Her track record with NATOA is rich with fundraising and revenue building, personnel growth, program development, and a newfound focus on Indigenous youth & Indigenous women. Michele is known for her ability to lead, inspire, and empower, and she is passionately committed to the betterment of Indigenous Canadian Lives.

Amidst keynotes and speaking engagements, Michele also co-wrote *Unbreakable Spirit*; a collaborative anthology of essays written by women who've overcome it all to reach success as they've defined it. She is often called upon by the press and major organizations to weigh in on Indigenous issues and she also volunteers on the Indigenous Education Advisory Circle as the co-chair for the Durham Catholic District School board, Gala Committee for Human Rights Watch and the Board of Directors for the Canadian Juries Commission.



## Nadine St-Louis

Nadine St-Louis is a social and cultural entrepreneur with Mi'kmaq, Acadian and Scottish roots with more than 25 years of experience in management, community development and governance. She has earned recognition in cultural, social and political circles and has become an important leader in the development of an Indigenous economy through arts and culture in Quebec, Canada and abroad.

In 2012, she founded Sacred Fire Productions, a non-profit Indigenous cultural organization, whose mandate is to promote Indigenous art, artists and cultures through projects and events that raise public awareness, break down stereotypes and promote intercultural dialogue for the inclusion and career advancement of urban Indigenous artists. Sacred Fire Productions contributes to the emergence of an Aboriginal cultural ecosystem by addressing the socioeconomic challenges and barriers faced by Aboriginal artists and youth in order to access inclusive participation in cultural revitalization and reconciliation.

In 2015, she launched the Ashukan Cultural Space, the first cultural and economic incubator in the heart of Old Montreal giving to more than a hundred artists an exhibition, sales and professional development space.





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## Nicole McLaren

Nicole McLaren is an award-winning Indigenous entrepreneur and accomplished economic development professional with an extensive career working in Canada's natural resource industry.

An entrepreneur at heart, Nicole's steady search for market opportunities, combined with her enterprising Indigenous roots, led her to launch Raven Reads – a direct to consumer subscription box featuring literature and goods from Indigenous authors and suppliers across North America.

Delivering to over 1,000 subscribers around the world every three months, Raven Reads is the only subscription box with a social purpose that provides quality content promoting positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Since its inception, Raven Reads has invested over \$75,000 back into the Indigenous economy and donated over \$2,000 of proceeds to charities supporting First Nation youth.

Nicole is also the Founder and Chair of the Indigenous Women's Business Network, an expanding non-profit network that provides support for other Indigenous women looking to start or grow their own business.

## Tanya Tulus

Tanya Tulus is a Program Advisor and Policy Analyst with the International Experience Canada (IEC) team at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). She is responsible for advancing a key component of IECs broad engagement and promotion strategy – engaging Indigenous youth and communities.





# SPEAKERS

## Vickie Whitehead

Vickie Whitehead is the Director, Indigenous Services at Crowe Mackay LLP and has worked with First Nations in British Columbia and across Canada for over 22 years. She specializes in Indigenous trust management and structures, financial management, board governance and program management. The majority of her early career was at the Department of Indigenous Services Canada (DISC) in the British Columbia and National offices in various financial and management related roles for over 17 years.

Vickie is Cree Métis, and volunteers on the following boards and committees: as the Vice-Chair of the National Aboriginal Trust Officers Association, the Advisory Council of the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association (AFOA) of BC, board of directors of AFOA Canada, and she serves on the CPA BC bylaws committee. Vickie completed her Masters of Business Administration in the Spring of 2012, holds a CPA, CGA, designation, and is a Certified Aboriginal Finance Manager (CAFM).

## Tim Laronde

Tim Laronde, Associate Vice President, Trust Services at Peace Hills Trust Company. Tim earned an undergraduate degree in Economics from Laurentian University. He is a member of NATOA, CANDO and AFOA. In May 2019, Tim successfully completed the AFOA Harvard Business School program – Leading People and Investing to Build Sustainable Communities.





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## Victoria LaBillois

A Mi'gmaq entrepreneur from Listuguj, in the traditional territory of Gespe'gewa'gi, Victoria owns Wejipeg Excavation Inc. Created in 2011, her company participated in wind park development in her territory. In 2016, Victoria added to her businesses with [Wejuseg Construction Inc.](#) which she co-owns and serves as President. In addition, she owns rental properties in both New Brunswick and Quebec, launched an [Rezmopolitan](#), an online clothing company, and is a partner in other joint ventures in the region.

Victoria has served many roles for the surrounding First Nations and the federal public service, working at the community level, as well as regional and national levels. Her energy, passion and commitment to serve Indigenous people is extensive.

Victoria holds a Bachelor of Arts ('91) in political science and a Master's in Business Administration ('04) both from the University of New Brunswick at Fredericton. Recipient of the E.D. Maher graduate student prize in administration awarded to her as the graduating MBA student with the highest GPA. Post-secondary studies included a sojourn in the French Riviera at the Université Canadienne en France ('90). She also holds a contractor's license ('11) from the Régie du bâtiment du Québec.

As coach and role model to many, Victoria serves as mentor to Indigenous women as part of the Indigenous Women in Community Leadership program at the Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. She has also been a mentor to the New Brunswick Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI) Aboriginal Business Accelerator Program. Victoria works to ensure that her community members and locals have a foundation in financial literacy - helping to build foundational skills around managing money in general and specifically, per capital distributions.

Victoria is fluent in English, French and intermediate Mi'gmaq. With her gift for languages, Victoria is the go-to MC for events in her community. She is a founding member of the local woman's hand drum group, Pugwalesg, preserving and sharing the ancestral songs of the Mi'gmaq. Ensuring her culture and language continues to thrive is a passion.

Giving back is important to Victoria; she served as co-chair for a national Steering Committee with the Canadian Construction Association, overseeing development of an Indigenous Engagement Guide for SMEs.

Victoria is a proud alumna of the 2017 Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference; with time spent examining Northern Ontario issues through a local lens and exploring relationships between leadership and community. In 2019, Victoria was selected to attend the Banff Forum where she enjoyed the discussions and challenging the status quo.

Current board service includes a Governor-in-Council appointment to the National Indigenous Economic Development Board; the regional Mi'gmawei Mawiomi Business Corporation which oversees the business interests of the three Mi'gmaq communities in Gaspésie and includes a Mi'gmaq-owned 150MW wind park; Puamun Meshkenu and the local Listuguj Economic Development Board.

In 2019, Victoria was honoured by the WXN as one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women as an RBC Champion.

