

For Immediate Release

#APN2024: Building Beyond Speakers Announced

Canada's Industry Thought Leaders Gather for Two Days in Vancouver and Virtually to Share Ideas and Collaborate on Improving Accessibility

March 7, 2024, Traditional territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) First Nation / Richmond, B.C. – Industry thought leaders will gather to share ideas and collaborate on solutions at Canada's premier conference on accessibility in the built environment on March 27 and 28, 2024. Brought to you by the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF), the Accessibility Professional Network (APN) conference [#APN2024: Building Beyond](#) Presented by Vancouver International Airport (YVR) is a two-day annual event taking place in-person at the Vancouver Convention Centre and virtually, dedicated to building an accessible and inclusive future for people of all abilities. Attendees will learn about key insights, best practices and the latest advancements in accessibility in the built environment.

#APN2024 will bring together Architects, Engineers, Designers, Planners, staff from all levels of government, individuals working in Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity (DE&I), Accessibility Professional Network (APN) members, and corporate leaders, among others, to collaborate on how to create an accessible built environment for all. Featuring an exciting line up of national and international speakers, this year's conference will provide attendees with an opportunity to learn about the latest initiatives advancing accessibility through engagement with industry leaders from Canada and abroad.

“Creating communities for people of all ages and abilities requires businesses, governments, design professionals, disability organizations and people with lived experience to work together to improve accessibility,” said Brad McCannell, VP Access and Inclusion at the Rick Hansen Foundation. “This year's APN conference theme Building Beyond reminds us that accessibility goes beyond check lists to truly consider what it means to make spaces meaningfully accessible and inclusive for a variety of users. 16% of the world's population has a disability, making us the largest minority group in the world and the only one that everyone is likely to become a member of at some point in their lives. Getting this right is an incredibly urgent priority that will only happen by working together.”

The APN and this conference were developed as part of RHF's commitment to building a community of like-minded people, propelled by the belief that it takes a village to create a shift in design culture and embed accessibility and inclusion from the very beginning of a project. Conference attendance is not limited to members of the APN. Anyone can attend the conference and are encouraged to join in-person or virtually. Some of this year's industry leading speakers will include:

- Anessa Powell, North and South America Account Manager, The Valuable 500
- Colleen Baldwin, Vice President, Head of Global Design Strategy and Transformation, Scotiabank

- Darryl Condon, hcma architecture + design, Managing Principal
- Ernesto Morales, Université Laval, Associate Professor
- Haley Flaro, Ability New Brunswick, Executive Director
- Heela Omarkhail, Vice President, Social Impact, The Daniels Corporation
- Jamie Gray-Donald, Senior Vice President, Sustainability & Environmental, Health & Safety, Quadreal
- Marcy Yale, Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC), National President
- Mikiko Terashima, Dalhousie University, Associate Professor
- Murray Gallant, Chief Architect, Department of National Defence
- Natasha Saltes, Canada Post, Director, Accessibility
- Philip Rizcallah, Accessibility Standards Canada, Chief Executive Officer
- Steven Maslin, AtkinsRéalis, Inclusive Design Technical Authority
- Sue Talusan, Director, Climate and Cities, Innovation Ecosystem, MaRS Discovery District
- Sunil Johan, Vice President, Public Policy, CSA Group
- Susie Chant, Provincial Government, Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility
- Suzette Noble, LaGuardia Gateway Partners, Chief Executive Officer
- Tilak Dutta, Scientist, KITE Research Institute
- Tolu Enaibe, Accessible Housing, Director of Program

Who Accessibility Professional Network Conference

What #APN2024: Building Beyond Presented by YVR

When Date: March 27 and 28, 2024
Time: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm PT / 12:00 pm –8:00 pm ET

Where Join virtually or in-person at the Vancouver Convention Centre, 1055 Canada Place, Vancouver, B.C.

How Purchase your in-person or virtual tickets [here](#).

Prices are \$300 CAD for the 2-day conference. For \$425, purchase a bundle with an APN membership and conference ticket.

Why Attend #APN2024: Building Beyond Presented by YVR to:

- Learn about key insights, best practices, and the latest advancements in accessibility from an exciting lineup of national and international experts;
- Connect with, learn from, and be inspired by other passionate individuals and professionals dedicated to advancing accessibility;
- Network and collaborate with accessibility professionals, community partners, corporate leaders and government agencies;
- Participate in meaningful discussions with experts from the accessibility field who collectively provide leading-edge professional development through their learning sessions;
- Learn about the latest success stories and challenges around accessibility in the built environment;
- Enhance your skills and career; and,
- RHFAC Professionals will earn all eight required annual Continuing Education Units (CEUs) through attendance at #APN2024.

APN2024: Building Beyond Presented by YVR is funded in part by the Government of British Columbia and the Government of Canada's Sectoral Initiatives Program. The conference is also made possible thanks to the generous support of:

- Presenting Partner: Vancouver International Airport (YVR);
- Gold Partners KPMG LLP and Realize; and
- Silver Partners: Accessibility Institute, Carleton University, Cadillac Fairview, Canada Post Corporation, Royal Bank of Canada, Toyota Canada, Scotiabank and the University of Alberta Online Learning & Continuing Education.

About the Accessibility Professional Network

The Accessibility Professional Network is a membership network brought to you by the Rick Hansen Foundation to bring together accessibility professionals including RHFAC Professionals, accessibility consultants, experts in the built environment, students passionate about access and anyone interested in creating a Canada that's accessible for all and barrier free. Become a member today to access exclusive resources and benefits to help build skills, knowledge, and connections, and stay up to date in the field of accessibility.

About the Rick Hansen Foundation

The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) was established in 1988, following the completion of Rick Hansen's Man In Motion World Tour. For over 35 years, RHF has worked to raise awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers for people with disabilities. Visit www.rickhansen.com to learn more.

RHF Media Contact:

Cynamon Schreinert, Hartley PR

Cynamon@hartleypr.com

(604) 802-2733

Accessibility Professional Network Team Contact:

apn@rickhansen.com

(778) 296-1515 (9 am to 5 pm PT, Monday to Friday)