



Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at EHRC's 2024 Agents of Change Conference

On April 10, Electricity Human Resources Canada ([EHRC](#)) wrapped up its annual DEI event in Toronto. It was wonderful to see over 130 attendees come together to learn from and inspire each other. Thank you all for making this day such a success!

This year's event focused on **Resiliency**. "EHRC recognizes diversity, equity, and inclusion as fundamental pillars of a sustainable energy economy and workforce," said **Michelle Branigan, CEO** of EHRC in her opening remarks. "In the face of pushback and debate about the value of DEI, both in workplaces and societally, this conversation is both timely and crucial. It reflects the ongoing challenges and obstacles encountered in the pursuit of creating inclusive environments. "

The event offered a diverse array of topics and perspectives, commencing with a beautiful smudging ceremony by knowledge keeper **Valerie King**, who shared her wisdom and insight with attendees.

Panel discussions featured inspiring narratives of transformation and firsthand experiences shared by resilient women, Indigenous peoples, racialized individuals, persons with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, and newcomers to Canada.

A special surprise was the return of youth from the Bach Children's Chorus! There was not a dry eye in the room as they spoke to their fears and hopes for a world that is inclusive and where every voice matters.





This year, **Vivian Yoanidis**, Senior Manager of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at Hydro One was honoured with the **Agent of Change Award** in recognition of her outstanding commitment and unwavering dedication to fostering an inclusive and equitable workplace. Presenting the award was 2023 recipient Carol Daymont of Emera, and Award Sponsor Natural Forces Solar, represented by Katie Phillips.

Industry leaders offered practical advice and strategies for individuals and organizations seeking to strengthen their DEI initiatives and sustain DEI momentum. DEI remains a crucial factor in their strategic planning, impacting financial outcomes and organizational development.



The event also included workshops and sessions on implementing inclusive practices, fostering allyship, and creating supportive environments for marginalized communities. Keynote speaker **Dr. Shimi Kang** held the audience spellbound as she spoke to resilience and mental wellness.

EHRC's DEI lead **Muhammad Ahsan** spoke to visionary allyship, while Adriana Leigh's interactive workshop informed on how to identify and name disrespectful behaviour, create respectful relationships, and learn how to have clear conversations about boundaries.

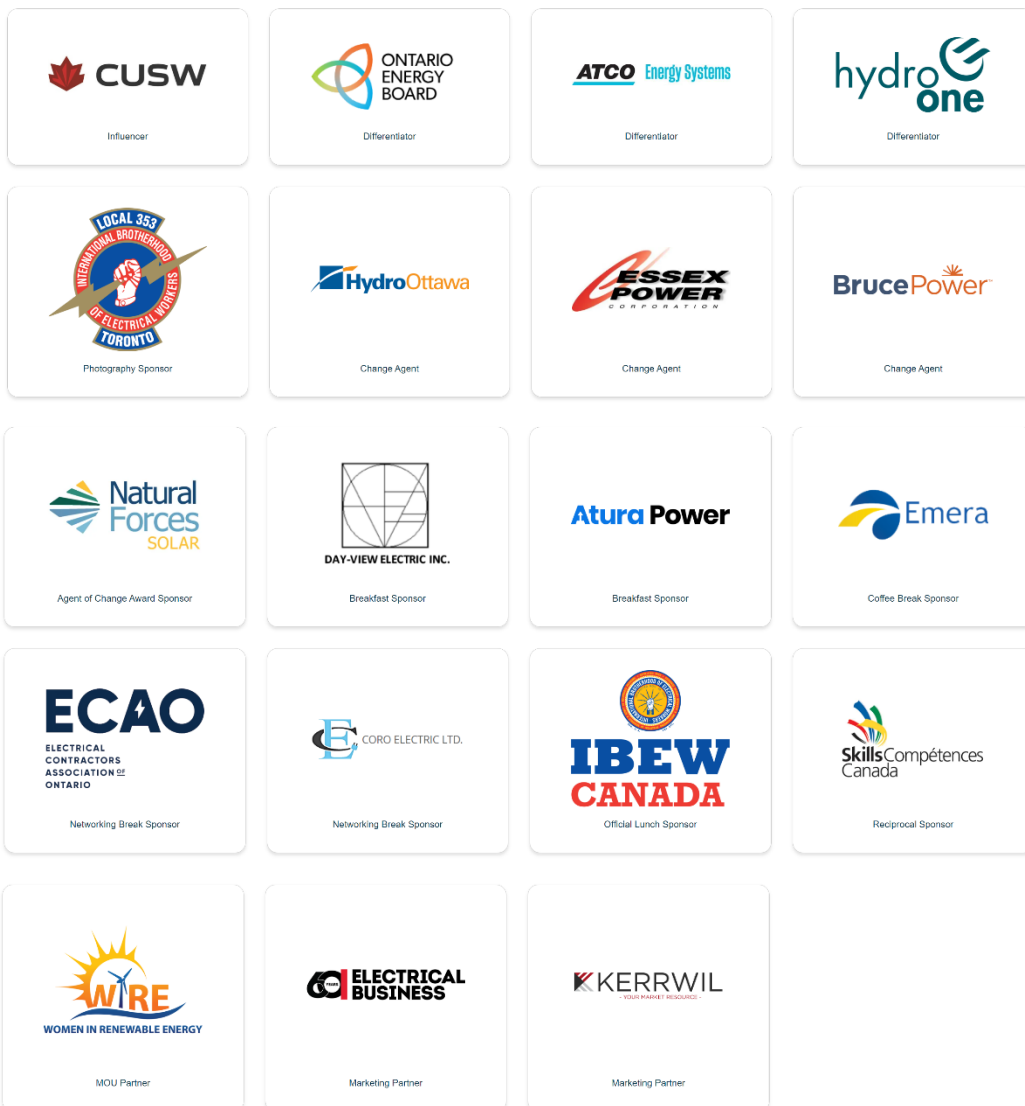


In lieu of speakers' gifts EHRC was pleased to make a charitable donation to [The Moose Hide Campaign](#), an Indigenous-led grassroots movement to engage men and boys in ending violence towards women and children, and [Forests Ontario](#).

[Agents of Change 2024](#) served as a platform for fostering dialogue, sharing experiences, and promoting resilience within DEI spaces. Planning is already underway for our 2025 event – and we'd love to hear from you if you have thoughts on what you would like to see included. Contact Muhammad Ahsan at Ahsan@ehrc.ca with your program ideas, or Marie Mould at Mould@ehrc.ca if you are interested in partnering.



One final thank you to our sponsors – we could not do this without your generous support and leadership!



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