



PAGSE Update

April 2020

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Message from the Chair

Dear members and friends of PAGSE,



I am very pleased to provide a few words for our first newsletter of 2020 and share with you an update on the recent activities and plans for PAGSE.

Although our Bacon and Egghead speaker series had to be placed on hold due to COVID-19, we started the year with a very well-attended presentation from John Smol who reminded Parliamentarians about the urgency of climate change through the evidence he has collected in the field. Under the leadership of our new B&E Chair, Natalie Goto, we are working to reschedule the speakers who were supposed to present this spring for the fall or into 2021. Another idea under consideration would be to have a few speakers give online presentations that can be shared with the public. This format could engage PAGSE's main audience (the elected government) as well as the Canadian public in this time of confinement. This would maintain the visibility of not only PAGSE but also of the sponsors of the speaker series until the House sits again. Your feedback would be welcomed as this format for the speaker series would be outside of the norms for PAGSE.

With the Bacon and Egghead speaker series on hold for now, we have made progress on some of the proposed plans for PAGSE that will be presented to the Council at its next meeting. This would have not been possible without the support of our new manager, Emma Brown. Emma, who is an engineer by training, joined us in January and has been very effective at re-launching the speaker series while providing administrative support. We have been collecting quotes for the re-branding of PAGSE and options on the incorporation of the organization are on their way.

In February, I also met with the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) to introduce myself as Chair and discuss the opportunity for our organizations to work together on joint activities. This first meeting was positive as the leadership of the RSC indicated support for PAGSE. I am looking forward to further discussing this with the Council and the RSC.

I will end this note by inviting you to share with Emma and I your ideas and suggestions on our plans for PAGSE, and I sincerely thank our members and sponsors for their continued support in these difficult times.

- Dr Jérôme Marty

Did you know that this year marks the 25th anniversary of PAGSE? Some of PAGSE's achievements so far include:

- 🏆 Hosting over *120 Bacon and Eggheads*, bringing together scientists and Parliamentarians on issues of critical importance to Canada
- 🏆 Preparing over *20 submissions* for the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, advocating for continued investment and support for Canada's Science and Engineering community
- 🏆 Compiling dozens of [SciEng Pages](#), providing Canada's policymakers with summaries of the state of knowledge around topics of critical importance

Ideas on how we should celebrate this important milestone? Let us know! (ebrown@nature.ca)

Update from the Bacon and Eggheads Committee Chair



I had the privilege of taking over as Chair of the Bacon and Eggheads Committee in January, respectfully filling the shoes of our departing Chair, Professor Danielle Fortin who is now enjoying a sabbatical self-isolating in the southern hemisphere. We are grateful to Professor Fortin for the time she has committed to the organization of a stimulating Bacon & Eggheads series over the last three years.

I am also grateful that we were able to host a captivating Breakfast with Professor John Smol prior to the implementation of coronavirus-limiting physical distancing practices. Dr. Smol wove a fascinating tale of his observations from expeditions in the far north, providing compelling evidence that the recent floods, loss of arctic freshwater and sea-ice retreats are unprecedented, and add to the huge body of evidence that demonstrate the reality of climate change.

Our committee looks forward to organizing equally informative Bacon and Eggheads Breakfasts in the future (hopefully free of physical-distancing restrictions!), when we can bring cutting-edge research results to our Parliamentarians on the Hill. Future 'Eggheads' include Nobel Laureate Donna Strickland (third time's a charm?) and Professor Jeff Mogil, a pain expert from McGill University.

In the meantime, I continue to proudly bear witness to the strength of our Canadian society as we pull together, following the advice of experts on best practices for self-isolation, and helping friends, family, and general members of our community. Stay safe everyone!

- Dr Natalie Goto



L to R: Alejandro Adem (President, NSERC), John Smol (Queen's University), and Bruce Stanton (Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons), February 20, 2020

COVID-19 Resources

For a summary on the science behind COVID-19, please visit this overview from former PAGSE Chair Rees Kassen: [The science underpinning policies to deal with COVID-19](#).

Rees has also made available his slides on this topic that were prepared for his fourth year evolutionary biology class at the University of Ottawa: [An explainer on evolution and spread of novel Coronavirus](#).

PAGSE Council members may recall last April's presentation by special guest Jim Handman, Executive Director of the [Science Media Centre of Canada](#). Here are some helpful resources compiled by the SMCC, aimed at connecting the media and the public with relevant experts in Canada and academic literature related to COVID-19:

- [Canadian COVID-19 academic experts](#)
- [Collection of research papers related to COVID-19](#)

Community Updates

IEEE Canada Seeking Panelists for *Technology Leadership Monthly Webinar*



IEEE Canada is hosting a free webinar series on Technology Leadership, open to the general public. This webinar series is a platform bringing thought leaders from different stakeholders, from all walks of life to present their views and advocate their positions on science, technology, society, and future economy. They invite professional associations, learnt societies, think tanks, governmental agencies, and other institutions to participate and contribute speakers.

It is a monthly online event; the first webinar is scheduled on April 27th, 2020 at 2 pm EDT. For more information and future speaking opportunities, please contact Dr Kexing Liu, IEEE Canada Outreach and Partnership Committee Chair, kexing.liu@ieee.org.

April 27th Speaker: Jeff Kinder of the Institute on Governance

Topic: Beyond Endless Frontiers: Re-negotiating the Social Contract between Science, Engineering and Society

Registration: <https://events.vtools.ieee.org/m/228287>

Housekeeping

- 🧪 Follow us on Twitter at [@ottawaeggheads](https://twitter.com/ottawaeggheads)
- 🧪 If you are the PAGSE representative for your society and are going on Sabbatical and/or looking for a replacement, please let us know so we can maintain regular communication with appropriate stakeholders.
- 🧪 We'd love to highlight any of our community's neat science or engineering stories, images, upcoming events, or collaboration opportunities. To submit content for a future newsletter, please reach out to Emma (ebrown@nature.ca).

Sponsor Recognition

PAGSE's efforts to help Parliamentarians connect with the latest findings across science and engineering would not be possible without the ongoing support of our generous sponsors. **A sincere thank you goes out to the following organizations, especially during these unprecedented times:**

