



The Partnership Group for
Science and Engineering

Le Partenariat en faveur des
sciences et de la technologie

APRIL 2021 NEWSLETTER

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Message from the Chair

Over the last couple of months, PAGSE was able to continue its main mission that is to share about science and engineering with Parliamentarians, via our 2 main activities: the Bacon and Eggheads speaker series and the SciEng Page policy brief.

The remote format of our speaker series has allowed a much more diverse audience from across Canada to attend the presentations. Given the ongoing restrictions, we are planning to pursue the delivery of our programs online for most of the year.

Our activities are made possible because of the continued support of our sponsors. We are welcoming additional support from the National Research Council of Canada (the NRC) and we thank Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) for helping us produce our upcoming SciEng Page on sustainable mining in Canada.

The new Board of Directors is also pursuing its work, setting the governance of PAGSE and input from our members has been critical.

We invite you to join us at our next Bacon and Egghead event on Quantum technologies on April 22 and I am looking forward to continuing helping our organization to grow.

Wishing everyone a safe spring and a vaccination as soon as available.

Jérôme Marty
PAGSE Chair

*Our inaugural
virtual Eggheads!*



THOUGHTS FROM THE HILL



MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT RICHARD CANNINGS

As a biologist, Richard has spent his life working tirelessly to protect BC's environment. Richard brought this commitment to Ottawa in 2015 when he was elected Member of Parliament for South Okanagan-West Kootenay.

Before running for public office, Richard served on many provincial and national boards and was the author of several award-winning books. He was named BC's Biologist of the Year in 1996.

"WE NEED EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES MORE THAN EVER IN THIS AGE OF DISINFORMATION. WE NEED MORE SCIENTISTS ON PARLIAMENT HILL."

I never planned to become a politician. Nine years ago, I was enjoying the life of a biologist, working on conservation projects in the Okanagan Valley, helping design citizen science programs across Canada, and writing books on the natural history of British Columbia. And then someone phoned me and asked if I would run in an upcoming provincial election.

I reluctantly accepted that challenge. I was uncomfortable speaking authoritatively about subjects beyond my areas of expertise, as politicians are always called upon to do. But by the end of the campaign, I was enjoying the debates.

I lost that first election but six months later I was asked to run in the federal election. It was a time when issues such as climate inaction and muzzling scientists were at the centre of public discourse. I really felt that parliament needed more scientists and I quite willingly entered the fray. Two years later, I found myself in Ottawa as a rookie MP.

As I struggled to learn the ropes, I discovered PAGSE and the Bacon and Eggheads programs. It was so encouraging to meet new colleagues from the House and Senate at those early morning breakfasts, colleagues who shared my passion for science and how it should be shaping policy in Canada. And the scientists I met there were just as pleased to have the opportunity to speak directly with decision makers on Parliament Hill.

Whether it is in setting climate action targets, developing pandemic strategies, or assessing the value of harm reduction strategies, we need evidence-based policies more than ever in this age of disinformation. We need more scientists on Parliament Hill.



BACON & EGGHEADS UPCOMING EVENT

Dr. Alexandre Blais

THE GLOBAL RACE TOWARDS QUANTUM TECHNOLOGIES: CANADA'S CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMMINENT OPPORTUNITIES

Join PAGSE for a bilingual online presentation,
followed by a moderated question and answer
session with Dr. Alexandre Blais

- 📅 April 22, 2021
- 🕒 12:15pm - 1:15pm (EDT)
- 🔗 Online Webinar
- 📅 Register on Eventbrite or email ebrown@pagse.org



What our guests are saying:

"Another great presentation having the rare combination of great communication and great depth of knowledge."

"Thank you for organizing these webinars, please keep doing this. It is very important to bring the science perspective to our policy makers."

"This was a fabulous lay person overview. Seeing Canadian innovation at work is heartening."

"I'm glad you're running them via web. I realize it's to adjust because of the pandemic, but there have been plenty in the past that I wanted to attend that I couldn't b/c I'm not in Ottawa."

"Dr. Naeth displayed the reasons she has won many teaching awards during her career. An excellent communicator of complex concepts."





PARTING WISDOM



Chris Burn is Chancellor's Professor of Geography at Carleton University and President of the International Permafrost Association. He has just stepped down from the PAGSE Council after representing CFES since 2013. Chris is a field scientist, who began research on permafrost in central Yukon in 1982 and has returned every calendar year since then to sites throughout Yukon and in the western Arctic. He gave a Bacon and Eggheads talk in 2016 on Permafrost science heats up: understanding and preparing for change in northern landscapes. He is a member of the February 2021 Arctic Inspiration Prize winning team from the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun for their Indigenous Food Sovereignty Hub.

Since 2013 I have had the privilege of representing the Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences at PAGSE. PAGSE has been ably chaired throughout these 8 years, but I want to thank Rees Kassen and Martha Guy especially for introducing me to the ways and means of the organization.

PAGSE is unique. While our meetings are low key and informal, there is considerable respect for the Group scattered through the upper echelons of the federal system because of whom we represent, because we treat our guests with respect, and because we ask sensible questions. I was impressed in my first year when all the items we mentioned in our federal budget statement showed up in the estimates 8 months later! This has been a frequent occurrence and indicates the sensitivity of the system to initiatives that are crafted with all Canadians in mind.

Every meeting has been interesting and engaging, skimming over the personalities and themes that motivate federal science policy. Sometimes the familiar has been a revelation: one speaker told us that peer-review was a secret weapon that guaranteed the quality of science but the federal government did not know this; the same person gave us a 30 minute seminar on the innovation ecosystem, placing their own organization, not unnaturally, in the middle of the institutional food web. Back in the day, our speakers were enthusiastic supporters of the federal innovation pipeline or, alternatively, experienced senior bureaucrats patiently waiting for things to change.

Eight years ago, the federal government emphasised science and engineering as generators of rising standards of living and GDP. Events have now shifted attention to disease control and more selective national priorities. We have yet to see the impact on federal programs of the deep borrowing made to cope with the pandemic. PAGSE will need to help prepare its members for potentially grim news by meeting key policy makers over the next 12 months.



SciEng Pages are back!

SciEng Pages aims to increase discussion on topical issues that have science and engineering at their core, by summarizing the current state of knowledge and policy landscape.

Each issue is prepared and reviewed by a multi-disciplinary team of volunteers, and is published free of charge.

All SciEng Pages can be found on our website at: <https://pagse.org/scieng-pages/>, including our [latest issue on 5G technology](#). Thank you to CANARIE for supporting the restart of this program!



We are also very grateful to the National Research Council of Canada for their support of an issue for publication in Summer/Fall 2021.

If you have topic suggestions for future issues, please contact Emma (ebrown@pagse.org).

And stay tuned for the next issue, being produced in collaboration with CFES, with funding from NRCan:

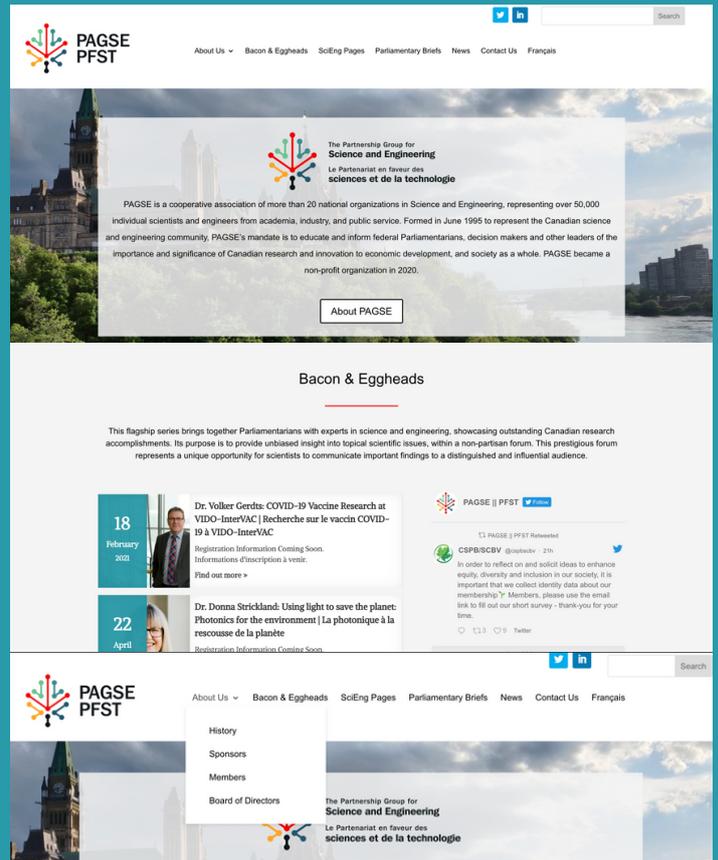


The New PAGSE Website is Live!

We hope everyone has a chance to check out our new website. It will continue to evolve as we formalize PAGSE's operations, including by-laws to come in the new year. In the meantime, several updates have made it even easier for stakeholders to access PAGSE's activities.

Some highlights include:

-  A dedicated events module for Bacon and Eggheads
-  A news page for keeping track of announcements, newsletters, and other PAGSE updates
-  Directories of our members, sponsors, and much more.



Join [our mailing list](#) to be notified when we have upcoming events or release new publications.



The Bacon and Eggheads Committee is actively seeking new members! Please contact Emma (ebrown@pagse.org) for more information.



To nominate speakers for the Bacon and Eggheads series, [please use this form](#).

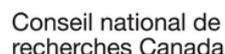


Follow PAGSE on Twitter: [@ottawaeggheads](#)



Stay connected with PAGSE on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/pagse>

PAGSE's activities are generously supported by our members and the following organizations:



A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM TD BANK GROUP:

In a period of unprecedented disruption and with climate change widely seen as one of the greatest threats to a sustainable future, our progress towards helping individuals and communities prosper has never been more critical.

That's why we were proud on November 9, 2020, to announce our commitment to a global climate action plan, which includes a target to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with its operations and financing activities by 2050, aligned to the associated principles of the Paris Agreement.

Along with our net-zero emission targets, we also announced that we would not provide new project-specific financial services, including advisory services, for activities that are directly related to the exploration, development, or production of oil and gas within the Arctic Circle, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

As a global institution, we know we have an important role to play and a responsibility to act in helping the transition to a low carbon economy in how we conduct our business, work with partners, make our operations more sustainable, govern our activities and manage risks, and support our customers and colleagues.

We look forward to working with PAGSE in the coming year to ensure that Canada's leaders have access to science and engineering research to support their decision-making on these critical topics.



Board of Directors

Jérôme Marty, Chair
Robert Crawhall
Maria DeRosa
Natalie Goto
Rees Kassen
Kexing Liu



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For questions regarding PAGSE's programs or to learn more about how your society can become a member, please contact us at info@pagse.org.

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