Trust, transparency, and technology:
Access to information in BC

OIPC
OFFICE OF THE INFORMATION & PRIVACY COMMISSIONER FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA

9:30am **Registration opens, with snacks provided by BC FIPA**

10:00am **Call to conference, territorial acknowledgment, & fireside chat**

Michael Harvey
Information & Privacy Commissioner for BC

John Tuck
Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Legal Services Branch, BC Ministry of Attorney General

10:40am **Access, AI, and accountability**

Applicants and public bodies alike bear responsibility and accountability for how they participate in the access to information system under FIPPA, and interact with one another. The rapid emergence of generative AI and agentic AI as tools that are now broadly available is presenting both opportunities and challenges. This panel will explore the role of AI in access from all sides. What amounts to responsible use of AI and AI agents by an applicant? How should public bodies respond to AI-generated requests and submissions? How can public bodies use technology, including AI, to facilitate and expedite the access process? What are a public body's legal and ethical obligations in terms of providing access to AI-generated information?

Moderator:
Alexis Kerr,
Partner, Norton Rose Fulbright

George Emery
CEO, Vivacity Technologies

Michelle Schop
Data Operations Analyst, PrivacyWorks

Kyle Friesen
Legal Counsel, Surrey Police Service

11:40am **Break**

11:55am **Reflecting on reconciliation and access: where we are, where we are going**

Have you had the opportunity to explore reconciliation in the access to information context? This panel will review some of the ways that reconciliation is being – and could be – accounted for in the administration of access to information in British Columbia. We will explore the FOI applicant experience, data sovereignty and information sharing, cases that engage reconciliation, and how BC's Modern Treaty landscape may shape the dialogue in BC.

Moderator:
oline Twiss
Deputy Commissioner, OIPC

Murray Rankin
Lawyer, former Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation for BC, former MP

Nicola Collins
Legal Counsel, Tsawwassen First Nation

Jennifer Jansen
Manager of Government and Legislative Services, Tsawwassen First Nation

Kayla Black
Participant, Spotlight: Child Welfare

12:55pm **Lunch**

1:55pm **On the record: FOI and journalism in BC**

One of the key functions of FOI law is to facilitate journalism in the public interest. Canada and BC have rich traditions of investigative journalism grounded in FOI research. This research is often challenging, however, and journalists working on pressing stories often run up against barriers presented by the letter of FOI law, the complexities of FOI requests, and the nature of information management in public bodies. On this panel, experienced investigative journalists will discuss the importance and opportunities associated with FOI-based journalism, common challenges, and ideas for change.

Moderator:
Mike Larsen
President, BC FIPA

Amanda Follet Hosgood
Northern BC Reporter, The Tyee

Francesca Fionda
Data Lead, Spotlight: Child Welfare

2:55pm **Break (snacks provided by PrivacyWorks)**

3:15pm **Access frustrated: working with abusive, unreasonable, and vexatious behaviour**

When a small minority of applicants consume a disproportionate amount of finite resources system-wide, there are fewer resources for bona fide requests and respectful conduct. At the same time, resource asymmetries between applicants and public bodies means that restrictions on the right of access requires careful oversight. This practical and frank discussion will discuss recent changes to FIPPA, recent OIPC guidance and decisions, and approaches from seasoned experts in the field.

Moderator:
Ethan Plato
Legal Counsel, OIPC

Kate Phipps
Partner, Arvay Finlay

Matt Malone
Research Director, Digitalization, Security & Democracy, Centre for International Governance Innovation

Suzanne Kennedy
Partner, Harris and Company

4:15pm **Closing remarks**